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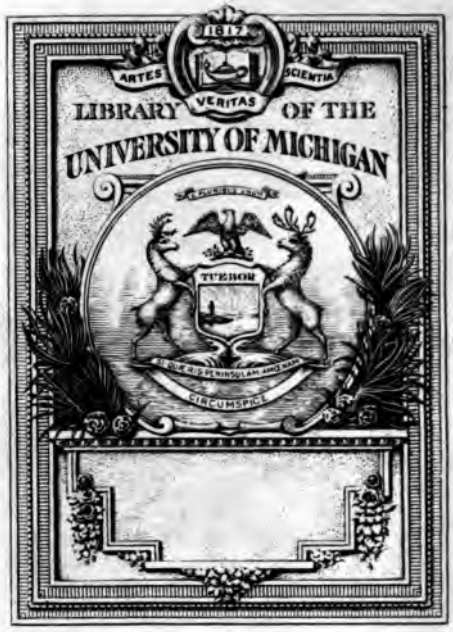
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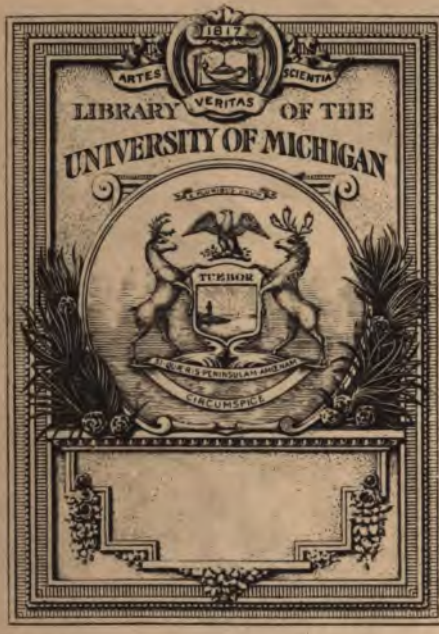
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E L O I S A.

LETTER CXX.

FROM MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

HOW tedious is your ſtay! This going backward and forward is very diſagreeable. How many hours are loſt before you return to the place where you ought to remain for ever, and, therefore, how much worſe is it for you ever to go away! The idea of ſeeing you for ſo ſhort a time takes from the pleaſure of your company. Do not you perceive, that by reſiding at your own houſe and mine alternately, you are in fact at home in neither, and cannot you contrive ſome means by which you may make your abode in both at once?

What are we doing, my dear couſin? How many precious moments we loſe, when we have none to waſte! Years ſteal upon us; youth begins to vaniſh; life ſlides away imperceptibly; its momentary bliſs is in our poſſeſſion, and we refuſe to enjoy it! Do you recollect the time when we were yet girls, thoſe early days ſo agreeable and delightful, which no other time of life affords, and which the mind with ſo much difficulty forgets? How often, when we were

obliged to part for a few days, or even for a few hours, have we ſadly embraced each other, and vowed that when we were our own miſtreſſes we would never be aſunder! We are now our own miſtreſſes, and yet we paſs one half of the year at a diſtance from each other. Is then our affection weaker? My dear and tender friend, we are both ſenſible how much time, habit, and your kindneſs have rendered our attachment more ſtrong and indiſſoluble. As to myſelf, your abſence daily becomes more inſupportable, and I can no longer live for a moment without you. The progreſs of our friendſhip is more natural than it appears to be; it is founded not only on a ſimilarity of character, but of condition. As we advance in years, our affections begin to centre in one point. We every day loſe ſomething that was dear to us, which we can never replace. Thus we periſh by degrees, till at length, being wholly devoted to ſelf-love, we loſe life and ſenſibility, even before our exiſtence ceaſes. But a ſuſceptible mind arms itſelf with all its force againſt this anticipated death: when a chilneſs begins to ſeiſe the extremities, it collects all the genial warmth of nature round its own centre; the more connexions it loſes, the cloſer it cleaves to thoſe which remain, and all its former ties are combined to attach it to the laſt object.

This is what, young as I am, I ſeem to experience. Ah! my dear, my poor heart has been too ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions! It was ſo early

early exhauſted, that it grew old before its time; and ſo many different affections have abſorbed it to that degree, that it has no room for any new attachments. You have known me in the ſucceſſive capacities of a daughter, a friend, a miſtreſs, a wife, and a mother. You know how every character has been dear to me! Some of theſe connexions are utterly deſtroyed, others are weakened. My mother, my affectionate mother is no more; tears are the only tribute I can pay to her memory, and I do but half enjoy the moſt agreeable ſenſations of nature. As to love, it is wholly extinguiſhed, it is dead for ever, and has left a vacancy in my heart, which will never be filled up again. We have loſt your good and worthy huſband, whom I loved as the dear part of yourſelf, and who was ſo well deſerving of your friendſhip and tenderneſs. If my boys were grown up, maternal affection might ſupply theſe vacancies; but that affection, like all others, has need of participation, and what return can a mother expect from a child only four or five years old? Our children are dear to us long before they are ſenſible of our love, or capable of returning it; and yet how much we want to expreſs the extravagance of our fondneſs to ſome one who can enter into our affection! My huſband loves them; but not with that degree of ſenſibility I could wiſh; he is not intoxicated with fondneſs as I am; his tenderneſs for them is too rational: I would have it to be more lively, and more like my own.

In ſhort, I want a friend, a mother, who can be as extravagantly fond of my children, and her own, as myſelf. In a word, the fondneſs of a mother makes the company of a friend more neceſſary to me, that I may enjoy the pleaſure of talking continually about my children, without being troubleſome. I feel double the pleaſure in the careſſes of my little Marcellinus, when I ſee that you ſhare it with me. When I embrace your daughter, I fancy that I preſs you to my boſom. We have obſerved a hundred times, on ſeeing our little cherubs at play together, that the union of our affections has ſo united them, that we have not been able to diſtinguiſh to which of us they ſeverally belonged.

This is not all: I have powerful reaſons for deſiring to have you always near me, and your abſence is painful to me in more reſpects than one. Think on my averſion to all hypocriſy, and reflect on the continual reſerve in which I have lived upwards of ſix years towards the man whom I love above all others in the world. My odious ſecret oppreſſes me more and more, and my duty to reveal it ſeems every day more indiſpenſable. The more I am prompted by honour to diſcloſe it, the more I am obliged by prudence to conceal it. Conſider what a horrid ſtate it is, for a wife to carry miſtruſt, falſehood, and fear, even to her huſband's arms; to be afraid of opening her heart to him who is maſter of it, and to conceal one half of my life, to inſure the peace of the other! Good God!

God! from whom do I conceal my ſecret thoughts, and hide the receſſes of a ſoul with which he has ſo much reaſon to be ſatisfied? From my Wolmar, my huſband! and the moſt worthy huſband with which Heaven ever rewarded the virtue of unſullied chaſtity. Having deceived him once, I am obliged to continue the deceit, and bear the mortification of finding myſelf unworthy of all the kindneſs he expreſſes. My heart is afraid to receive any teſtimony of his eſteem, his moſt tender careſſes make me bluſh, and my conſcience interprets all his marks of reſpect and attention into ſymptoms of reproach and diſdain. It is a cruel pain conſtantly to harbour this remorſe, which tells me that he miſtakes the object of his eſteem. Ah! if he but knew me, he would not uſe me thus tenderly! No, I cannot endure this horrid ſtate: I am never alone with that worthy man, but I am ready to fall on my knees before him, to confeſs my fault, and to expire at his feet with grief and ſhame.

Nevertheleſs, the reaſons which at firſt reſtrained me acquire freſh ſtrength every day, and every motive which might induce me to make the declaration, conſpires to enjoin me ſilence. When I conſider the peaceable and tranquil ſtate of our family, I cannot reflect without horrour what an irreparable diſturbance might be occaſioned by a ſingle word. After ſix years paſſed in perfect union, ſhall I venture to diſturb the peace of ſo good and diſcreet a

huſband, who has no other will than that of his happy wife, no other pleaſure than to ſee order and tranquillity throughout his family? Shall I afflict with domeſtick broils an aged father, who appears to be ſo contented, and ſo delighted with the happineſs of his daughter and his friend? Shall I expoſe my dear children, thoſe lovely and promiſing infants, to have their education neglected and ſhamefully ſlighted, to become the melancholy victims of family diſcord, between a father inflamed with juſt indignation, tortured with jealouſy, and an unfortunate and guilty mother, always bathed in tears? I know what Mr. Wolmar is, now he eſteems his wife; but how do I know what he will be when he no longer regards her? Perhaps he ſeems calm and moderate, becauſe his predominant paſſion has had no room to diſplay itſelf. Perhaps he would be as violent in the impetuoſity of his anger, as he is gentle and compoſed, now he has nothing to provoke him.

If I owe ſuch regard to every one about me, is not ſomething likewiſe due to myſelf? Does not a virtuous and regular courſe of life for ſix years obliterate, in ſome meaſure, the errours of youth, and am I ſtill obliged to undergo the puniſhment of a failing which I have ſo long lamented? I confeſs, my dear couſin, that I look backwards with reluctance; the reflexion humbles me to that degree, that it diſpirits me, and I am too ſuſceptible of ſhame, to endure the idea, without falling into a kind of deſpair. I

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muſt reflect on the time which has paſſed ſince my marriage, in order to recover myſelf. My preſent ſituation inſpires me with a confidence, of which thoſe diſagreeable reflexions would deprive me. I love to nouriſh in my breaſt theſe returning ſentiments of honour. The rank of a wife and mother exalts my ſoul, and ſupports me againſt the remorſe of my former condition. When I view my children and their father about me, I fancy that every thing breathes an air of virtue, and they baniſh from my mind the diſagreeable remembrance of my former frailties. Their innocence is the ſecurity of mine; they become dearer to me, by being the inſtruments of my reformation; and I think on the violation of honour with ſuch horrour, that I can ſcarce believe myſelf the ſame perſon who formerly was capable of forgetting its precepts. I perceive myſelf ſo different from what I was, ſo confirmed in my preſent ſtate, that I am almoſt induced to conſider what I have to declare as a confeſſion which does not concern me, and which I am not obliged to make.

Such is the ſtate of anxiety and uncertainty in which I am continually fluctuating in your abſence. Do you know what may be the conſequence of this one day or other? My father is ſoon to ſet out for Berne, and is determined not to return till he has put an end to a tedious lawſuit; not being willing to leave us the trouble of concluding it, and perhaps doubting our zeal in the proſecution of it. In the mean time,

between his departure and his return, I ſhall be alone with my huſband, and I perceive that it will then be impoſſible for me to keep the fatal ſecret any longer. When we have company, you know, M. Wolmar often chooſes to retire, and take a ſolitary walk: he chats with the peaſants; he enquires into their ſituation; he examines the conditions of their grounds; and aſſiſts them, if they require it, both with his purſe and his advice. But when we are alone, he never walks without me; he ſeldom leaves his wife and children, but enters into their little amuſements with ſuch an amiable ſimplicity, that on theſe occaſions I always feel a more than common tenderneſs for him. In theſe tender moments, my reſerve is in ſo much more danger, as he himſelf frequently gives me opportunities of throwing it aſide, and has a hundred times held converſation with me which ſeemed to excite me to confidence. I perceive that, ſooner or later, I muſt diſcloſe my mind to him; but ſince you would have the confeſſion concerted between us, and made with all the precaution which diſcretion requires, return to me immediately, or I can anſwer for nothing.

My dear friend, I muſt conclude, and yet what I had to add is of ſuch importance, that you muſt allow me a few words more. You are not only of ſervice to me when I am with my children and my huſband, but above all when I am alone with poor Eloiſa: ſolitude

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is more dangerous, becauſe it grows agreeable to me, and I court it without intending it. It is not, as you are ſenſible, that my heart ſtill ſmarts with the pain of its former wounds—no, they are cured—I perceive that they are—I am very certain, I dare believe myſelf virtuous. I am under no apprehenſions about the preſent, it is the time paſt which torments me. There are ſome reflexions as dreadful as the original ſenſation; the recollection moves us; we are aſhamed to find that we ſhed tears, and we do but weep the more. They are tears of compaſſion, regret, and repentance; love has no ſhare in them: I no longer harbour the leaſt ſpark of love; but I lament the miſchiefs it has occaſioned; I bewail the fate of a worthy man, who has been bereft of peace, and perhaps of life, by gratifying an indiſcreet paſſion. Alas! he has undoubtedly periſhed in this long and dangerous voyage, which he undertook out of deſpair. If he was living, he would ſend us tidings from the fartheſt part of the world; near four years have elapſed ſince his departure. They ſay the ſquadron on board of which he is has ſuffered a thouſand diſaſters; that it hath loſt three fourths of its crews; that ſeveral ſhips have gone to the bottom, and that no one can tell what is become of the reſt. He is no more! he is no more! A ſecret foreboding tells me ſo. The unfortunate wretch has not been ſpared, any more than ſo many others. The diſtreſſes of his voyage and melancholy, ſtill more fatal than

all, have ſhortened his days. Thus vaniſhes every thing which glitters for a while on earth. The reproach of having occaſioned the death of a worthy man was all that was wanting to complete the torments of my conſcience. With what a ſoul was he endued! how ſuſceptible of the tendereſt love! He deſerved to live!

I try in vain to diſſipate theſe melancholy ideas; but they return every minute, in ſpite of me. Your friend requires your aſſiſtance, to enable her to baniſh, or to moderate them; and ſince I cannot forget this unfortunate man, I had rather talk of him with you, than think of him by myſelf.

You ſee how many reaſons concur to make your company continually neceſſary to me. If you, who have been more diſcreet and fortunate, are not moved by the ſame reaſons, yet does not your inclination perſuade you of the ſame neceſſity? If it is true that you will never marry again, having ſo little ſatisfaction in your family, what houſe can be more convenient for you than mine? For my part, I am in pain, as I know what you endure in your own; for, notwithſtanding your diſſimulation, I am no ſtranger to your manner of living, and I am not to be duped by thoſe gay airs which you affected to diſplay at Clarens. You have often reproached me with my failings; and I have a very great one to reproach you with in your turn; which is, that your grief is too ſolitary and confined. You get into a corner to indulge your affliction,

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as if you were aſhamed to weep before your friend. Clara, I do not like this. I am not ungenerous like you; I do not condemn your tears, I would not have you ceaſe at the end of two or ten years, or while you live, to honour the memory of ſo tender a huſband; but I blame you, that, after having paſſed the beſt of your days in weeping with your Eloiſa, you rob her of the pleaſure of weeping in her turn with you, and of waſhing away, by more honourable tears, the ſcandal of thoſe which ſhe ſhed in your boſom. If you are aſhamed of your grief, you are a ſtranger to real affliction! If you find a kind of pleaſure in it, why will you not let me partake of it? Are you ignorant that a participation of affections communicates a ſoft and affecting quality to melancholy, which content never feels? And was not friendſhip particularly deſigned to alleviate the evils of the wretched, and leſſen their pains?

Such, my dear, are the reflexions you ought to indulge; to which I muſt add, that when I propoſe your coming to live with me, I make the propoſal no leſs in my huſband's name than my own. He has often expreſſed his ſurpriſe, and even been offended, that two ſuch intimates as we ſhould live aſunder: he aſſures me that he has told you ſo, and he is not a man who talks inadvertently. I do not know what reſolution you will take with reſpect to theſe propoſals; I have reaſon to hope that it will be ſuch as I could wiſh. However it be, mine

is fixed and unalterable. I have not forgotten the time when you would have followed me to England. My incomparable friend! it is now my turn. You know my diſlike of the town, my taſte for the country, for rural occupations, and how ſtrongly a reſidence of three years has attached me to my houſe at Clarens. You are no ſtranger likewiſe to the trouble of removing a whole family, and you are ſenſible that it would be abuſing my father's good nature to oblige him to move ſo often. Therefore, if you will not leave your family, and come to govern mine, I am determined to take a houſe at Lauſanne, where we will all live with you. Prepare yourſelf, therefore; every thing requires it; my inclination, my duty, my happineſs. The ſecurity of my honour, the recovery of my reaſon, my condition, my huſband, my children, myſelf, I owe all to you; I am indebted to you for all the bleſſings I enjoy; I ſee nothing but what reminds me of your goodneſs, and without you I am nothing. Come then, my much loved friend, my guardian angel; come and enjoy the work of your own hands; come and gather the fruits of your benevolence. Let us have but one family, as we have but one ſoul to cheriſh it; you ſhall ſuperintend the education of my ſons, and I will take care of your daughter; we will ſhare the maternal duties between us, and make our pleaſure double. We will raiſe our minds together to the contemplation of that Being, who purified mine by means of your endeavours;

endeavours; and having nothing more to hope for in this life, we will quietly wait for the next, in the boſom of innocence and friendſhip.

LETTER CXXI.

ANSWER.

GOOD heaven! my dear couſin, how I am delighted with your letter! Thou lovely preacher! . . . Lovely indeed: but in the preaching ſtrain nevertheleſs. What a charming peroration! A perfect model of ancient oratory. The Athenian architect! . . . . That florid ſpeaker! . . . . You remember him . . . . In your old Plutarch . . . Pompous deſcriptions, ſuperb temple! . . . When he had finiſhed his harangue, comes another; a plain man; with a grave, ſober, and unaffected air . . . who anſwered, as your couſin Clara might do . . . with a low, hollow, and deep tone . . . *All that he has ſaid, I will do.* Here he ended, and the aſſembly rang with applauſe! Peace to the man of words. My dear, we may be conſidered in the light of theſe two architects; and the temple in queſtion is that of Friendſhip.

But let us recapitulate all the fine things you have ſaid to me. Firſt, that we loved each other; ſecondly, that my company was neceſſary to you; thirdly, that your's was neceſſary to me, likewiſe; and laſtly, that as it was in our power to live together the reſt of our days, we ought to do it. And you have really diſcovered all this without

without a guide! In truth, thou art a woman of vaſt eloquence! Well, but let me tell you how I was employed on my part, while you was compoſing this ſublime epiſtle. After that I will leave you to judge, whether what you ſay, or what I do, is moſt to the purpoſe.

I had no ſooner loſt my huſband, than you ſupplied the vacancy he had left in my heart. While he was living, he ſhared my affections with you: when he was gone, I was your's entirely, and as you obſerve, with reſpect to the conformity of friendſhip and maternal affection, my daughter was an aditional tie to unite us. I not only determined, from that time, to paſs my days with you, but I formed a more enlarged plan. The more effectually to blend our two families into one, I propoſed, on a ſuppoſition that all circumſtances prove agreeable, to marry my daughter ſome day or other to your eldeſt ſon, and the name of huſband, aſſumed in jeſt, ſeemed to be a lucky omen of his taking it one day in earneſt.

With this view, I endeavoured immediately to put an end to the trouble of a conteſted inheritance; and finding that my circumſtances enabled me to ſacrifice ſome part of my claim in order to ſettle the reſt, I thought of nothing but placing my daughter's fortune in ſome ſure funds, where it might be ſecure from any apprehenſions of a law-ſuit. You know that I am whimſical in moſt things; my whim in this was to ſurpriſe you. I intended to come into your room

room one morning early, with my child in one hand, and the parchment in the other; and to have preſented them both to you, with a fine compliment on committing to your care the mother, the daughter, and their effects, that is to ſay, my child's fortune. Govern her, I propoſed to have ſaid, as beſt ſuits the intereſt of your ſon; for from henceforwards it is your concern and his; for my own part, I ſhall trouble myſelf about her no longer.

Full of this pleaſing idea, it was neceſſary for me to open my mind to ſomebody who might aſſiſt me to execute my project. Gueſs now whom I choſe for a confidant? One Mr. Wolmar. Should you not know him? "My huſband, couſin?" Yes, your huſband, couſin. The very man from whom you make ſuch a difficulty of concealing a ſecret, which it is of conſequence to him never to know, is he who has kept a ſecret from you, the diſcovery of which would have given you ſo much pleaſure. This was the true ſubject of all that myſterious converſation between us, about which you uſed to banter us with ſo much humour. You ſee what hypocrites theſe huſbands are. Is it not very droll in them to accuſe us of diſſimulation? But I required much more of your huſband. I perceived that you had the ſame plan which I had in view, but you kept it more to yourſelf, as one who did not care to communicate her thoughts, till ſhe was led to the diſcovery. With an intent, therefore, to make

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your ſurpriſe more agreeable, I would have had him, when you propoſed our living together, to have ſeemed as if he diſapproved of your eagerneſs, and to have given his conſent with reluctance. To this he made me an anſwer, which I well remember, and which you ought never to forget: for ſince the firſt exiſtence of huſbands, I doubt whether any one of them ever made ſuch an anſwer before. It was as follows: "My dear little couſin, I know Eloiſa . . . "I know her well . . . better than ſhe ima- "gines, perhaps . . . her generoſity of heart is "ſo great, that what ſhe deſires ought not to be "refuſed, and her ſenſibility is too ſtrong to "bear a denial, without being afflicted. Du- "ring theſe five years that we have been married, "I do not know that I have given her the leaſt "uneaſineſs; and I hope to die without ever "being the cauſe of her feeling a moment's in- "quietude." Couſin, reflect on this: this is the huſband whoſe peace of mind you are inceſſantly meditating to diſturb.

For my part, I had leſs delicacy, or more gentleneſs of diſpoſition, and I ſo naturally diverted the converſation to which your affection ſo frequently led you, that as you could not tax me with coldneſs or indifference towards you, you took it into your head that I had a ſecond marriage in view, and that I loved you better than any thing, except a huſband. You ſee, my dear child, your moſt inmoſt thoughts do not eſcape me. I gueſs your meaning, I penetrate your

your deſigns; I enter into the bottom of your ſoul, and for that reaſon I have always adored you. This ſuſpicion, which ſo opportunely led you into a miſtake, appeared to me well worth encouraging. I took upon me to play the part of the coquettiſh widow, which I acted ſo well as to deceive even you. It is a part for which I have more talents than inclination. I ſkilfully employed that piquant air which I know how to put on, and with which I have entertained myſelf in making a jeſt of more than one young coxcomb. You have been abſolutely the dupe of my affectation, and you thought me in haſte to ſupply the place of a man, to whom of all others it would be moſt difficult to fit a ſucceſſor. But I am too ingenuous to play the counterfeit long, and your apprehenſions were ſoon removed. But to confirm you the more, I will explain to you my real ſentiments on that head.

I have told you an hundred times, when I was a maid, that I was never deſigned for a wife. Had my determination depended on myſelf alone, I ſhould never have married. But our ſex cannot purchaſe liberty but by ſlavery; and, before we can become our own miſtreſſes, we muſt begin by being ſervants. Though my father did not confine me, I was not without uneaſineſs in my family. To free myſelf from that vexation, therefore, I married Mr. Orbe. He was ſuch a worthy man, and loved me with ſuch tenderneſs, that I moſt ſincerely loved him in

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my turn. Experience gave me a more advantageous opinion of marriage than I had conceived of it, and effaced thoſe ill impreſſions I had received from Chaillot. Mr. Orbe made me happy, and did not repent his endeavours. I ſhould have diſcharged my duty with any other, but I ſhould have vexed him, and I am ſenſible that nothing but ſo good a huſband could have made me a tolerable wife. Would you think that even this afforded me matter of complaint? My dear, we loved each other too affectionately; we were never gay. A ſlighter friendſhip would have been more ſprightly: I ſhould even have preferred it; and I think I ſhould have choſen to have lived with leſs content, if I could have laughed oftener.

Add to this, that the particular circumſtances of your ſituation gave me uneaſineſs. I need not remind you of the dangers to which an unruly paſſion expoſed you. I reflect on them with horrour. If you had only hazarded your life, perhaps I might have retained ſome remains of gaiety; but terrour and grief pierced my ſoul, and till I ſaw you married, I did not enjoy one moment of real pleaſure. You are no ſtranger to my affliction at that time, you felt it. It had great influence over your good diſpoſition, and I ſhall always bleſs thoſe fortunate tears, which were probably the occaſion of your return to virtue.

In this manner I paſſed all the time that I lived with my huſband. Since it has pleaſed

the

the Almighty to take him from me, judge whether I can hope to find another ſo much to my mind, and whether I have any temptation to make the experiment? No, couſin, matrimony is too ſerious a ſtate for me; its gravity does not ſuit with my humour; it makes me dull, and ſits awkwardly upon me; not to mention that all conſtraint whatever is intolerable to me. Conſider, you who know me, what charms can an attachment have in my eyes, during which, for ſeven years together, I have not laughed ſeven times heartily! I do not propoſe, like you, to turn matron at eight-and-twenty. I find myſelf a ſmart little widow, likely to get a huſband ſtill, and I think that if I were a man, I ſhould have no objection to ſuch a one as myſelf. But to marry again, couſin! Hear me; I ſincerely lament my poor huſband; I would have given up one half of my days, to have paſſed the other half with him; and nevertheleſs, could he return to life, I ſhould take him again for no other reaſon, than becauſe I had taken him before.

I have declared to you my real intentions. If I have not been able to put them in execution, notwithſtanding Mr. Wolmar's kind endeavours, it is becauſe difficulties ſeem to increaſe, as my zeal to ſurmount them ſtrengthens. But my zeal will always gain the aſcendancy, and before the ſummer is over, I hope to return to you for the remainder of my days.

I muſt

I muſt now vindicate myſelf from the reproach of concealing my uneaſineſs, and chooſing to weep alone: I do not deny it, and this is the way I ſpend the moſt agreeable time I paſs here. I never enter my houſe, but I perceive ſome traces which remind me of him who made it agreeable to me. I cannot take a ſtep, I cannot view a ſingle object, without perceiving ſome ſigns of his tenderneſs and goodneſs of heart; and would you have my mind to be unaffected? When I am here, I am ſenſible of nothing but the loſs I have ſuſtained. When I am near you, I view all the comfort I have left. Can you make your influence over my diſpoſition a crime in me? If I weep in your abſence, and laugh in your company, whence proceeds the difference? Ungrateful woman! it is becauſe you alleviate all my afflictions, and I cannot grieve while I enjoy your ſociety.

You have ſaid a great deal in favour of our long friendſhip; but I cannot pardon you for omitting a circumſtance that does me moſt honour; which is, that I love you, though you eclipſe me! Eloiſa, you were born to rule. Your empire is more deſpotick than any in the world. It extends even over the will, and I am ſenſible of it more than any one. How happens it, my Eloiſa? We are both in love with virtue; honour is equally dear to us; our talents are the ſame; I have very near as much ſpirit as you; and am not leſs handſome: I am ſenſible of all this, and yet, notwithſtanding all,

you

you preſcribe to me, you overcome me, you caſt me down, your genius cruſhes mine, and I am nothing before you. Even while you were engaged in an attachment with which you reproached yourſelf, and that I, who had not copied your failing, might have taken the lead in my turn, yet the aſcendancy ſtill remained in you. The frailty I condemned in you appeared to me almoſt in the light of a virtue; I could ſcarce forbear admiring in you what I ſhould have cenſured in another. In ſhort, even at that time, I never accoſted you without a ſenſible emotion of involuntary reſpect; and it is certain that nothing but your gentleneſs and affability of manners could entitle me to the rank of your friend: by nature, I ought to be your ſervant. Explain this myſtery if you can; for my part, I am at a loſs how to ſolve it.

But, after all, I do in ſome meaſure conceive the reaſon, and I believe that I have explained it before now. The reaſon is, that your diſpoſition enlivens every one round you, and gives them a kind of new exiſtence, for which they are bound to adore you, ſince they derive it entirely from you. It is true, I have done you ſome ſignal ſervices; you have ſo often acknowledged them, that it is impoſſible for me to forget them. I cannot deny but that, without my aſſiſtance, you had been utterly undone. But what did I do, more than return the obligation I owed you? Is it poſſible to have a

long

long acquaintance with you, without finding one's mind impreſſed with the charms of virtue, and the delights of friendſhip? Do not you know that you have power to arm in your defenſe every one who approaches you, and that I have no advantage whatever over others, but that of being, like the guards of Seſoſtris, of the ſame age and ſex, and of having been brought up with you. However it be, it is ſome comfort to Clara, that though ſhe is of leſs eſtimation than Eloiſa, yet without Eloiſa, ſhe would be of leſs value ſtill; and in ſhort, to tell you the truth, I think that we ſtood in great need of each other, and that we ſhould both have been loſers if fate had parted us.

I am chiefly concerned leſt, while my affairs detain me here, you ſhould diſcover your ſecret, which you are every minute ready to diſcloſe. Conſider, I entreat you, that there are ſolid and powerful reaſons for concealing it, and that nothing but a miſtaken principle can tempt you to reveal it. Beſides, our ſuſpicion that it is no longer a ſecret to him who is moſt intereſted in the diſcovery is an additional argument againſt making any declaration without the greateſt circumſpection. Perhaps your huſband's reſerve may ſerve as an example and a leſſon to us: for in ſuch caſes there is very often a great difference between pretending to be ignorant of a thing, and being obliged to know it. Stay, therefore, I beſeech you, till we conſult once more on this affair. If your apprehenſions were well grounded,

ed, and your lamented friend was no more, the beſt reſolution you could take, would be to let your hiſtory and his misfortunes be buried together. If he is alive, as I hope he is, the caſe may be different; but let us wait till we are ſure of the event. In every ſtate of the caſe, do not you think that you ought to pay ſome regard to the advice of an unfortunate wretch, whoſe evils all ſpring from you?

With reſpect to the danger of ſolitude, I conceive and cannot condemn your fears, though I am perſuaded that they are ill-founded. Your paſt terrours have made you fearful; but I preſage better of the time preſent, and you would be leſs apprehenſive, if you had more reaſon to be ſo. But I cannot approve of your anxiety with regard to the fate of our poor friend. Now your affections have taken a different turn, believe me, he is as dear to me as to yourſelf. Nevertheleſs, I have forebodings quite contrary to your's, and more agreeable to reaſon. Lord B—— has heard from him twice, and wrote to me on the receipt of the laſt letter, to acquaint me that he was in the South-Seas, and had already eſcaped all the dangers you apprehend. You know all this as well as I, and yet you are as uneaſy as if you were a ſtranger to theſe particulars. But there is a circumſtance you are ignorant of, and of which I muſt inform you; it is, that the ſhip on which he is on board was ſeen two months ago off the Canaries, making ſail for Europe. This is the account my father received from

Holland,

Holland, which he did not fail to tranſmit to me; for it is his cuſtom to be more punctual in informing me concerning publick affairs, than in acquainting me with his own private concerns. My heart tells me that it will not be long before we hear news of our philoſopher, and that your tears will be dried up, unleſs, after having lamented him as dead, you ſhould weep to find him alive. But, thank God, you are no longer in danger from your former weakneſs.

Deh! foſſe or qui quel miſer pur un poco,
Ch' è gia di piangere e di viver laſſo!
Alas! what fears ſhould heighten your concern,
So us'd in liftleſs ſolitude to mourn!

This is the ſum of my anſwer. Your affectionate friend propoſes and ſhares with you the agreeable expectation of a laſting re-union. You find that you are neither the firſt, nor the only authour of this project; and that the execution of it is more forward than you imagine. Have patience, therefore, my dear friend, for this ſummer. It is better to delay our meeting for ſome time, than to be under the neceſſity of parting again.

Well, good Madam, have not I been as good as my word, and is not my triumph complete? Come, fall on your knees, kiſs this letter with reſpect, and humbly acknowledge that, once in her life at leaſt, Eloiſa Wolmar has been outdone in friendſhip.

LETTER

LETTER CXXII.

TO MRS. ORBE.

MY dear couſin, my benefactreſs, my friend! I come from the extremities of the earth, and bring a heart ſtill full of affection for you. I have croſſed the line four times; have traverſed the two hemiſpheres, have ſeen the four quarters of the globe; its diameter has been between us: I have been quite round it, and yet could not eſcape from you one moment. It is in vain to fly from the object of our adoration: the image, more fleet than the winds, purſues us from the end of the world; and, wherever we tranſport ourſelves, we bear with us the idea by which we are animated. I have endured a great deal; I have ſeen others ſuffer more. How many unhappy wretches have I ſeen periſh! Alas! they rated life at a high price! and yet I ſurvived them . . . Perhaps my condition was leſs to be pitied; the miſeries of my companions affected me more than my own. I am wretched here (ſaid I to myſelf) but there is a corner of the earth where I am happy and tranquil; and the proſpect of felicity, beſide the lake of Geneva, made me amends for what I ſuffered on the ocean. I have the pleaſure, on my return, to find my hopes confirmed: Lord B—— informs me that you both enjoy health and peace; and that if you in particular have loſt the agreeable diſtinction of a wife, you nevertheleſs retain the title

of a friend and mother, which may contribute to your happineſs.

I am at preſent too much in haſte to ſend you a detail of my voyage in this letter. I dare hope that I ſhall ſoon have a more convenient opportunity; mean time I muſt be content to give you a ſlight ſketch, rather to exite than gratify your curioſity. I have been near four years in making this immenſe tour, and returned in the ſame ſhip in which I ſet ſail; the only one of the whole ſquadron which we have brought back to England.

I have ſeen South-America, that vaſt continent, which, for want of arms, has been obliged to ſubmit to the Europeans, who have made it a deſert, in order to ſecure their dominion. I have ſeen the coaſts of Braſil, from whence Liſbon and London draw their treaſures, and where the miſerable natives tread upon gold and diamonds, without daring to lay hands on them for their own uſe. I croſſed, in mild weather, thoſe ſtormy ſeas under the Antarctick circle, and met with the moſt horrible tempeſts in the Pacifick Ocean.

E in mar dubbioſo ſotto ignoto polo
Provai l'onde fallaci, e l' vento infido.

Have brav'd the unknown ſeas, where, near the pole,
Blow faithleſs winds, and waves deceitful roll.

I have ſeen, at a diſtance, the abode of thoſe ſuppoſed giants, who are no otherwiſe greater than the reſt of their ſpecies, than as they are more courageous, and who maintain their independence more by a life of ſimplicity and frugality, than by their extraordinary ſtature. I made

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a reſidence of three months in a deſert and delightful iſland, which afforded an agreeable and lively repreſentation of the primitive beauty of nature, and which ſeems to be fixed at the extremity of the world, to ſerve as an aſylum to innocence and perſecuted love; but the greedy European indulges his brutal diſpoſition in preventing the peaceful Indian from reſiding there, and does juſtice on himſelf, by not making it his own abode.

I have ſeen, in the rivers of Mexico and Peru, the ſame ſcenes as at Braſil; I have ſeen the few wretched inhabitants, the ſad remains of two powerful nations, loaded with irons, ignominy, and miſery, weeping in the midſt of their precious metals, and reproaching heaven for having laviſhed ſuch treaſures upon them. I have ſeen the dreadful conflagration of a whole city, which periſhed in the flames, without having made any reſiſtance or defenſe. Such is the right of war among the intelligent, humane, and refined Europeans! They are not ſatisfied with doing the enemy all the miſchief from whence they can reap any advantage, but they reckon as clear gain all the deſtruction they can make among his poſſeſſions. I have coaſted along almoſt the whole weſtern part of America, not without being ſtruck with admiration, on beholding fifteen hundred leagues of coaſt, and the greateſt ſea in the world, under the dominion of a ſingle potentate, who may be ſaid to keep the keys of one hemiſphere.

After having croſſed this vaſt ſea, I beheld a new ſcene on the other continent. I have ſeen the moſt numerous and moſt illuſtrious nation in the world in ſubjection to a handful of banditti; I have had near intercourſe with this famous people, and I do not wonder that they are ſlaves. As often conquered as attacked, they have always been a prey to the firſt invader, and poſſibly will be ſo to the end of the world. They are well ſuited to their ſervile ſtate, ſince they have not the courage even to complain. They are learned, lazy, hypocritical, and deceitful: they talk a great deal, without ſaying any thing to the purpoſe; they are full of ſpirit without any genius; they abound in ſigns, but are barren in ideas; they are polite, full of compliments, dexterous, crafty, and knaviſh; they comprize all the duties of life in trifles, all morality in grimace, and have no other idea of humanity, than what conſiſts in bows and ſalutations. I landed upon a ſecond deſert iſland, more unknown, more delightful ſtill than the firſt, and where the moſt cruel accident had like to have confined us for ever. I was the only one, perhaps, whom ſo agreeable an exile did not terrify: am I not doomed to be an exile every where? In this place of terrour and delight I ſaw the attempts of human induſtry to diſengage a civilized being from a ſolitude where he wants nothing, and plunge him into an abyſs of new neceſſities.

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On the vaſt ocean, where one would imagine men would be glad to meet with their own ſpecies, I have ſeen two great ſhips ſail up to each other, join, attack, and fight together with fury, as if that immenſe ſpace was too little for either of them. I have ſeen them diſcharge flames and bullets againſt each other. In a fight which was not of long duration, I have ſeen the picture of hell. I have heard the triumphant ſhouts of the conquerors drown the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying. I bluſhed to receive my ſhare of an immenſe plunder; but received it in the nature of a truſt, and as it was taken from the wretched, to the wretched it ſhall be reſtored.

I have ſeen Europe tranſported to the extremities of Africa, by the labours of that avaricious, patient, and induſtrious people, who by time and perſeverance have ſurmounted difficulties which all the heroiſm of other nations could never overcome. I have ſeen thoſe immenſe and miſerable countries, which ſeem deſtined to no other purpoſe than to cover the earth with herds of ſlaves. At their vile appearance, I turned away my eyes, out of diſdain, horrour, and pity; and on beholding one fourth part of my fellow creatures transformed into beaſts for the ſervice of the reſt, I could not forbear lamenting that I was a man.

Laſtly, I beheld, in my fellow travellers, a bold and intrepid people, whoſe freedom and example retrieved, in my opinion, the honour of

the ſpecies; a people who deſpiſed pain and death, and who dreaded nothing but hunger and diſquiet. In their commander, I beheld a captain, a ſoldier, a pilot, a prudent and great man, and to ſay ſtill more perhaps, a friend worthy of Lord B——. But, throughout the whole world, I have never met with any reſemblance of Clara Orbe, or Eloiſa Etange, or found one who could recompenſe a heart truely ſenſible of their worth for the loſs of their ſociety.

How ſhall I ſpeak of my cure? It is from you that I muſt learn how far it is perfect. Do I return more free and more diſcreet than I departed! I dare believe that I do, and yet I cannot affirm it. The ſame image has conſtant poſſeſſion of my heart; you know how impoſſible it is for me ever to efface it; but her dominion over me is more worthy of her, and, if I do not deceive myſelf, ſhe holds the ſame empire in my heart as in your own. Yes, my dear couſin, her virtue has ſubdued me; I am now, with regard to her, nothing more than a moſt ſincere and tender friend; my adoration of her is of the ſame nature with your's; or rather, my affections do not ſeem to be weakened, but rectified; and, however nicely I examine, I find them to be as pure as the object which inſpires them. What can I ſay more, till I am put to the proof, by which I may be able to form a right judgement of myſelf? I am honeſt and ſincere; I will be what I ought to be; but how

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ſhall I anſwer for my affections, when I have ſo much reaſon to miſtruſt them? Have I power over the paſt? How can I avoid recollecting a thouſand paſſions which have formerly diſtracted me? How ſhall my imagination diſtinguiſh what is, from what has been? And how ſhall I conſider her as a friend, whom I never yet ſaw but as a miſtreſs? Whatever you may think of the ſecret motive of my eagerneſs, it is honeſt and rational, and merits your approbation. I will anſwer beforehand, at leaſt for my intentions. Permit me to ſee you, and examine me yourſelf, or allow me to ſee Eloiſa, and I ſhall then know my own heart.

I am to attend Lord B—— into Italy. Shall I paſs cloſe by your houſe, and not ſee you? Do you think this poſſible? Alas! if you are ſo cruel to require it, you ought not to be obeyed! But, why ſhould you deſire it? Are you not the ſame Clara, as kind and compaſſionate as you are virtuous and diſcreet, who condeſcended from her infancy to love me, and who ought to love me ſtill more, now that I am indebted to her for every thing*? No, my dear and lovely friend, ſuch a cruel denial will not become you; nor will it be juſt to me: it ſhall not put the finiſhing ſtroke to my miſery. Once

* What great obligations has he to her, who occaſioned all the misfortunes of his life?——Yes, miſtaken queriſt! he is indebted to her for the honour, the virtue, and peace of his beloved Eloiſa: he owes her every thing.

more, once more in my life, I will lay my heart at your feet. I will ſee you, you ſhall conſent to an interview. I will ſee Eloiſa likewiſe, and ſhe too ſhall give her conſent. You are both of you too ſenſible of my regard for her. Can you believe me capable of making this requeſt, if I found myſelf unworthy to appear in her preſence? She has long ſince bewailed the effects of her charms, ah! let her for once behold the fruits of her virtue!

P. S.—Lord B——'s affairs detain him here for ſome time: if I may be allowed to ſee you, why ſhould not I get the ſtart of him, to be with you the ſooner?

LETTER CXXIII.

FROM MR. WOLMAR.

THOUGH we are not yet acquainted, I am commanded to write to you. The moſt diſcreet and moſt beloved wife has lately diſcloſed her heart to her happy huſband. He thinks you worthy to have been the object of her affections, and he makes you an offer of his houſe. Peace and innocence reign in this manſion; you will meet with friendſhip, hoſpitality, eſteem, and confidence. Examine your heart, and if you find nothing there to deter you, come without any apprehenſions. You will not depart from him, without leaving behind you at leaſt one friend, by name

WOLMAR.

P. S.—Come, my friend, we expect you with eagerneſs. I hope I need not fear a denial.

ELOISA.

LETTER CXXIV.

FROM MRS. ORBE.

In which the preceding Letter was encloſed.

WELCOME, welcome, a thouſand times, dear St. Preux! for I intend that you ſhall retain that name, at leaſt among us. I ſuppoſe it will be ſufficient to tell you, that you will not be excluded, unleſs you mean to exclude yourſelf. When you find, by the encloſed letter, that I have done more than you required of me, you will learn to put more confidence in your friends, and not to reproach them on account of thoſe inquietudes which they participate when they are under the neceſſity of making you uneaſy. Mr. Wolmar has a deſire to ſee you; he makes you an offer of his houſe, his friendſhip, and his advice; this is more than requiſite to quiet my apprehenſions with regard to your journey, and I ſhould injure myſelf, if I miſtruſted you one moment. Mr. Wolmar goes farther, he pretends to accompliſh your cure, and he ſays that neither Eloiſa, you, nor I, can be perfectly happy till it is complete. Though I have great confidence in his wiſdom, and more in your virtue, yet I cannot anſwer

for the ſucceſs of this undertaking. This I know, that, conſidering the diſpoſition of his wife, the pains he propoſes to take is out of pure generoſity to you.

Come then, my worthy friend, in all the ſecurity of an honeſt heart, and ſatisfy the eagerneſs with which we all long to embrace you, and to ſee you eaſy and contented; come to your native land, and in the midſt of your friends reſt yourſelf after all your travels, and forget all the hardſhips you have undergone. The laſt time you ſaw me I was a grave matron, and my friend was on the brink of the grave; but now, as ſhe is well, and I am once more ſingle, you will find me as gay, and almoſt as handſome as ever. One thing, however, is very certain, that I am not altered with reſpect to you, and you may travel many times round the world, and not find one who has ſo ſincere a regard for you as your, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

TO LORD B——.

JUST riſen from my bed: 'tis yet the dead of night. I cannot reſt a moment. My heart is ſo tranſported, that I can ſcarce confine it within me. You, my lord, who have ſo often reſcued me from deſpair, ſhall be the worthy confident of the firſt pleaſure I have taſted for many a year.

I have ſeen her, my lord! my eyes have beheld

held her! I have heard her voice. I have preſſed her hand with my lips. She recollected me; ſhe received me with joy; ſhe called me her friend, her dear friend; ſhe admitted me into her houſe: I am happier than ever I was in my life. I lodge under the ſame roof with her, and while I am writing to you, we are ſcarce thirty paces aſunder.

My ideas are too rapid to be expreſſed; they crowd upon me all at once, and naturally impede each other. I muſt pauſe a while to digeſt my narrative into ſome kind of method.

After ſo long an abſence, I had ſcarce given way to the firſt tranſports of my heart, while I embraced you as my friend, my deliverer, and my father, before you thought of taking a journey to Italy. You made me wiſh for it, in hopes of relief from the burthen of being uſeleſs to you. As you could not immediately deſpatch the affairs which detained you in London, you propoſed my going firſt, that I might have more time to wait for you here. I begged leave to come hither; I obtained it, ſet out, and though Eloiſa made the firſt advances towards an interview, yet the pleaſing reflexion that I was going to meet her was checked by the regret of leaving you. My lord, we are now even; this ſingle ſentiment has cancelled my obligations to you.

I need not tell you that my thoughts were all the way taken up with the object of my journey; but I muſt obſerve one thing, that I began to

conſider that ſame object, which had never quitted my imagination, quite in another point of view. Till then I uſed to recall Eloiſa to my mind, ſparkling, as formerly, with all the charms of youth. I had always beheld her lovely eyes enlivened by that paſſion with which ſhe inſpired me. Every feature which I admired, ſeemed, in my opinion, to be a ſurety of my happineſs. My affection was ſo interwoven with the idea of her perſon, that I could not ſeparate them. Now I was going to ſee Eloiſa married, Eloiſa a mother, Eloiſa indifferent! I was diſturbed when I reflected how much an interval of eight years might have impaired her beauty. She had had the ſmall-pox, ſhe was altered, how great might that alteration be! My imagination obſtinately refuſed to allow any blemiſh in that lovely face. I reflected likewiſe on the expected interview between us, and what kind of reception I might expect, The firſt meeting preſented itſelf to my mind under a thouſand different appearances, and this momentary idea croſſed my imagination a thouſand times a day.

When I perceived the top of the hills, my heart beat violently, and told me, There ſhe is! I was affected in the ſame manner at ſea, on viewing the coaſts of Europe. I felt the ſame emotions at Meillerie, when I diſcovered the houſe of the Baron d'Etange. The world, in my imagination, is divided only into two regions, *that* where ſhe is, and *that* where ſhe is not.

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The former dilates as I remove from her, and contracts when I approach her, as a ſpot where I am deſtined never to arrive. It is at preſent confined to the walls of her chamber. Alas! that place alone is inhabited; all the reſt of the univerſe is an empty ſpace.

The nearer I drew to Switzerland, the more I was agitated. That inſtant in which I diſcovered the lake of Geneva from the heights of Jura was a moment of rapture and extacy. The ſight of my country, that beloved country, where a deluge of pleaſures had overflowed my heart; the pure and wholeſome air of the Alps; the gentle breeſe of the country, more ſweet than the perfumes of the Eaſt; that rich and fertile ſpot, that unrivalled landſcape, the moſt beautiful that ever ſtruck the eye of man, that delightful abode, to which I found nothing comparable in the vaſt tour of the globe; the aſpect of a free and happy people; the mildneſs of the ſeaſon, the ſerenity of the climate; a thouſand pleaſing recollections, which recalled to my mind the pleaſures I had enjoyed: all theſe circumſtances together threw me into a kind of tranſport which I cannot deſcribe, and ſeemed to collect the enjoyment of my whole life into one happy moment. Having croſſed the lake, I felt a new impreſſion, of which I had no idea. It was a certain emotion of fear, which checked my heart, and diſturbed me in ſpite of all my endeavours. This dread, of which I could not diſcover the cauſe, increaſed as I drew nearer to the town; it abated

my eagerneſs to get thither, and roſe to ſuch a height, that my expedition gave me as much uneaſineſs as my delay had occaſioned me before. When I came to Vevai, I felt a ſenſation which was very far from being agreeable. I was ſeiſed with a violent palpitation, which ſtopped my breath, ſo that I ſpoke with a trembling and broken accent. I could ſcarce make myſelf underſtood when I enquired for Mr. Wolmar; for I durſt not mention his wife. They told me he lived at Clarens. This information eaſed my breaſt from a preſſure equal to five hundred weight, and conſidering the two leagues I had to travel farther as a kind of reſpite, I was rejoiced at a circumſtance which at any other time would have made me uneaſy; but I learnt with concern that Mrs. Orbe was at Lauſanne. I went into an inn to recruit my ſtrength, but could not ſwallow a morſel: and when I attempted to drink, I was almoſt ſuffocated, and could not empty a glaſs but at ſeveral ſips. When I ſaw the horſes put to, my apprehenſions were doubled. I believe I ſhould have given any thing in the world to have had one of the wheels broken by the way. I no longer ſaw Eloiſa: my diſturbed imagination preſented nothing but confuſed objects before me; my ſoul was in a general tumult. I had experienced grief and deſpair, and ſhould have preferred them to that horrible ſtate. In a few words, I can aſſure you, that I never in my life underwent ſuch cruel agitation as I ſuffered in this little way,

way, and I am perſuaded that I could not have ſupported it a whole day.

When I arrived, I ordered the chaiſe to ſtop at the gate, and finding that I was not in a condition to walk, I ſent the poſtillion to acquaint Mr. Wolmar that a ſtranger wanted to ſpeak with him. He was taking a walk with his wife. They were acquainted with the meſſage, and came round another way, while I kept my eyes fixed on the avenue, and waited in a kind of trance, in expectation of ſeeing ſomebody come from thence.

Eloiſa had no ſooner perceived me than ſhe recollected me. In an inſtant, ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſhrieked, ſhe ran, ſhe leaped into my arms. At the ſound of her voice I ſtarted, I revived, I ſaw her, I felt her. O, my lord! O my friend! I cannot ſpeak. . . . Her look, her ſhriek, her manner inſpired me with confidence, courage, and ſtrength in an inſtant. In her arms I felt warmth, and breathed new life. A ſacred tranſport kept us for ſome time cloſely embraced in deep ſilence; and it was not till after we recovered from this agreeable delirium that our voices broke forth in confuſed murmurs, and our eyes intermingled tears. Mr. Wolmar was preſent; I knew he was, I ſaw him: but what was I capable of ſeeing? No, though the whole univerſe had been united againſt me; though a thouſand torments had ſurrounded me, I would not have detached my heart from the leaſt of thoſe careſſes, thoſe tender offerings of a pure

and

and ſacred friendſhip, which we will bear with us to heaven.

When the violent impetuoſity of our firſt meeting began to abate, Mrs. Wolmar took me by the hand, and turning towards her huſband, ſhe ſaid to him, with a certain air of candour and innocence which inſtantly affected me, "Though he is my old acquaintance, I do not preſent him to you, but I receive him from you, and he will hereafter enjoy my friendſhip no longer than he is honoured with your's."—"If new friends (ſaid Mr. Wolmar, embracing me) expreſs leſs natural ardour than thoſe of long ſtanding, yet they will grow old in their turn, and will not yield to any in affection." I received his embraces; but my heart had quite exauſted itſelf, and I was entirely paſſive.

After this ſhort ſcene was over, I obſerved, by a ſide-glance, that they had put up my chaiſe, and taken off my trunk. Eloiſa held by my arm, and I went with them towards the houſe, almoſt overwhelmed with pleaſure, to find they were determined I ſhould remain their gueſt.

It was then, that upon a more calm contemplation of that lovely face, which I imagined might have grown homely, I ſaw with an agreeable, yet ſad ſurpriſe, that ſhe was really more beautiful and ſparkling than ever. Her charming features are now more regular; ſhe is grown rather fatter, which is an addition to the reſplendent fairneſs of her complexion. The ſmall-pox has left ſome ſlight marks on her cheeks

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ſcarce perceptible. Inſtead of that mortifying baſhfulneſs which formerly uſed to make her caſt her eyes downwards, you may perceive in her chaſte looks the ſecurity of virtue allied with gentleneſs and ſenſibility; her countenance, though not leſs modeſt, is leſs timid; an air of greater freedom, and more liberal grace, has ſucceeded that conſtrained carriage which was compounded of ſhame and tenderneſs; and if a ſenſe of her failing rendered her then more bewitching, a conſciouſneſs of her purity now renders her more celeſtial.

We had ſcarce entered the parlour, when ſhe diſappeared, and returned in a minute. She did not come alone. Who do you think ſhe brought with her? Her children! Thoſe two lovely little ones, more beauteous than the day; in whoſe infant faces you might trace all the charms and features of their mother. How was I agitated at this ſight? It is neither to be deſcribed nor conceived. A thouſand different emotions ſeiſed me at once. A thouſand cruel and delightful reflexions divided my heart. What a lovely ſight! What bitter regrets! I found myſelf diſtracted with grief, and tranſported with joy. I ſaw, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the dear object of my affections multiplied before me. Alas! I perceived at the ſame time too convincing a proof that I had no longer any intereſt in her, and my loſſes ſeemed to be multiplied with her increaſe.

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She led them towards me. "Behold (ſaid ſhe, with an affecting tone, that pierced my ſoul) behold the children of your friend; they will hereafter be your friends. Henceforward I hope you will be their's." And immediately the two little creatures ran eagerly to me, took me by the hand, and ſo overwhelmed me with their innocent careſſes, that every motion of my ſoul centered in tenderneſs. I took them both in my arms, and preſſing them againſt my throbbing breaſt, "Dear and lovely little creatures (ſaid I, with a ſigh) you have an arduous taſk to perform. May you reſemble the authours of your being; may you imitate their virtues; and by your own hereafter adminiſter comfort to their unfortunate friends." Mrs. Wolmar in rapture threw herſelf round my neck a ſecond time, and ſeemed diſpoſed to repay me, by *her* embraces, thoſe careſſes which *I* had beſtowed on her two ſons. But how different was this from our firſt embrace! I perceived the difference with aſtoniſhment. It was the mother of a family whom I now embraced. I ſaw her ſurrounded by her huſband and children: and the ſcene ſtruck me with awe. I diſcovered an air of dignity in her countenance, which had not affected me till now: I found myſelf obliged to pay her a different kind of reſpect; her familiarity was almoſt uneaſy to me; lovely as ſhe appeared to me, I could have kiſſed the hem of her garment with a better grace than I ſaluted her cheek. In a word, from that moment I perceived that either ſhe or I were no longer

longer the ſame, and I began in earneſt to have a good opinion of myſelf.

Mr. Wolmar at length took me by the hand, and conducted me to the apartment which had been prepared for me. "This (ſaid he, as he entered) is your apartment: it is not deſtined to the uſe of a ſtranger: it ſhall never belong to another, and hereafter, if you do not occupy it, it ſhall remain empty." You may judge whether ſuch a compliment was not agreeable to me; but as I had not yet deſerved it, I could not hear it without confuſion. Mr. Wolmar, however, ſpared me the trouble of an anſwer. He invited me to take a turn in the garden. His behaviour there was ſuch as made me leſs reſerved, and aſſuming the air of a man who was well acquainted with my former indiſcretions, but who entirely confided in my integrity, he converſed with me as a father would ſpeak to his child; and by conciliating my eſteem, made it impoſſible for me ever to deceive him. No, my lord, he is not miſtaken in me; I ſhall never forget that it is incumbent on me to juſtify his and your good opinion. But why ſhould my heart reject his favours? Why ſhould the man whom I am bound to love be the huſband of Eloiſa?

That day ſeemed deſtined to put me to every kind of proof which I could poſſibly undergo. After we had joined Mrs. Wolmar, her huſband was called away to give ſome neceſſary orders, and I was left alone with her.

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I then found myſelf involved in freſh perplexity, more painful and more unexpected than any which I had yet experienced. What ſhould I ſay to her? How could I addreſs her? Should I preſume to remind her of our former connexions, and of thoſe times which were ſo recent in my memory? Should I ſuffer her to conclude that I had forgot them, or that I no longer regarded them? Think what a puniſhment it muſt be to treat the object neareſt your heart as a ſtranger? What infamy, on the other hand, to abuſe hoſpitality ſo far as to entertain her with diſcourſe to which ſhe could not now liſten with decency? Under theſe various perplexities I could not keep my countenance; my colour went and came; I durſt not ſpeak, nor lift up mine eyes, nor make the leaſt motion; and I believe that I ſhould have remained in this uneaſy ſituation till her huſband's return, if ſhe had not relieved me. For her part, this *tête-à-tête* did not ſeem to embarraſs her in the leaſt. She preſerved the ſame manner and deportment as before, and continued to talk to me with the ſame freedom; ſhe only, as I imagined, endeavoured to affect more eaſe and gaiety, tempered with a look, not timid or tender, but ſoft and affectionate, as if ſhe meant to encourage me to recover my ſpirits, and lay aſide a reſerve which ſhe could not but perceive.

She talked to me of my long voyages; ſhe enquired into particulars; into thoſe eſpecially which related to the dangers I had eſcaped, and the hardſhips I had endured: for ſhe was ſenſible,

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ſhe ſaid, that ſhe was bound in friendſhip to make me ſome reparation. "Ah, Eloiſa! (ſaid I, in a plaintive accent) I have enjoyed your company but for a moment; would you ſend me back to the Indies already?"—"No (ſhe anſwered, with a ſmile) but I would go thither in my turn."

I told her that I had given you a detail of my voyage, of which I had brought her a copy for her peruſal. She then enquired after you with great eagerneſs. I gave her an account of you, which I could not do without recounting the troubles I had undergone, and the uneaſineſs I had occaſioned you. She was affected; ſhe began to enter into her own juſtification in a more ſerious tone, and to convince me that it was her duty to act as ſhe had done. Mr. Wolmar joined us in the middle of her diſcourſe, and what confounded me was, that ſhe proceeded in the ſame manner as if he had not been there. He could not forbear ſmiling, on diſcovering my aſtoniſhment. After ſhe concluded, "You ſee (ſaid he) an inſtance of the ſincerity which reigns in this houſe. If you mean to be virtuous, learn to copy it: it is the only requeſt I have to make, and the only leſſon I would teach you. The firſt ſtep towards vice, is to make a myſtery of actions innocent in themſelves, and whoever is fond of diſguiſe will ſooner or later have reaſon to conceal himſelf. One moral precept may ſupply the place of all the reſt, which is this: neither to ſay or do any thing, which you would not have all the world ſee and hear. For my part,

I have

I have always eſteemed that Roman above all other men, who wiſhed that his houſe was built in ſuch a manner, that the world might ſee all his tranſactions.

"I have two propoſals (he continued) to make to you. Chooſe freely that which you like beſt; but accept either one or the other." Then taking his wife's hand and mine, and cloſing them together, he ſaid, "Our friendſhip commences from this moment; this forms the dear connection, and may it be indiſſoluble. Embrace her as your ſiſter and your friend; treat her as ſuch conſtantly; the more familiar you are with her, the better I ſhall eſteem you: but either behave, when alone, as if I was preſent; or in my preſence, as if I was abſent. This is all I deſire. If you prefer the latter, you may chooſe it without any inconvenience; for as I reſerve to myſelf the right of intimating to you any thing which diſpleaſes me, ſo long as I am ſilent in that reſpect you may be certain that I am not offended."

I ſhould have been greatly embarraſſed by this diſcourſe two hours before, but Mr. Wolmar began to gain ſuch an aſcendancy over me, that his authority already grew ſomewhat familiar to me. We all three entered once more into indifferent converſation, and every time I ſpoke to Eloiſa, I did not fail to addreſs her by the ſtile of *Madam*. "Tell me ſincerely (ſaid her huſband at laſt, interrupting me) in your *tête-à-tête* party juſt now, did you call her *Madam?*"—"No (anſwered I ſomewhat diſconcerted) but politeneſs . ."

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"Such politeneſs (he replied) is nothing but the maſk of vice; where virtue maintains its empire, it is unneceſſary; and I diſcard it. Call my wife *Eloiſa* in my preſence, or *Madam* when you are alone; it is indifferent to me." I began to know what kind of man I had to deal with, and I reſolved always to keep my mind in ſuch a ſtate as to bear his examination.

My body drooping with fatigue ſtood in need of refreſhment, and my ſpirits required reſt; I found both one and the other at table. After ſo many years abſence and vexation, after ſuch tedious voyages, I ſaid to myſelf, in a kind of rapture, I am in company with Eloiſa, I ſee her, I talk with her; I ſit at table with her, ſhe views me without inquietude, and entertains me without apprehenſions. Nothing interrupts our mutual ſatisfaction. Gentle and precious innocence, I never before reliſhed thy charms, and to-day, for the firſt time, my exiſtence ceaſes to be painful.

At night, when I retired to reſt, I paſſed by their chamber; I ſaw them go in together; I proceeded to my own in a melancholy mood, and this moment was the leaſt agreeable to me of any I that day experienced.

Such, my lord, were the occurrences of this firſt interview, ſo paſſionately wiſhed for, and ſo dreadfully apprehended. I have endeavoured to collect myſelf ſince I have been alone; I have compelled myſelf to ſelf examination; but as I am not yet recovered from the agitation of the preceding

preceding day, it is impoſſible for me to judge of the true ſtate of my mind. All that I know for certain, is, that if the nature of my affection for her is not changed, at leaſt the mode of it is altered, for I am always anxious to have a third perſon between us, and I now dread being alone with her as much as I longed for it formerly.

I intend to go to Lauſanne in two or three days, for as yet I have but half ſeen Eloiſa, not having ſeen her couſin; that dear and amiable friend, to whom I am ſo much indebted, and who will always ſhare my friendſhip, my ſervices, my gratitude, and all the affections of my ſoul. On my return I will take the firſt opportunity to give you a further account. I have need of your advice, and ſhall keep a ſtrict eye over my conduct. I know my duty, and will diſcharge it. However agreeable it may be to fix my reſidence in this houſe, I am determined, nay I have ſworn, that when I grow too fond of my abode, I will quit it immediately.

LETTER CXXVI.

MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

IF you had been kind enough to have ſtaid with us as long as we deſired, you would have had the pleaſure of embracing your friend before your departure. He came hither the day before yeſterday, and wanted to viſit you to-day; but the

the fatigue of his journey confines him to his room, and this morning he was let blood. Beſides, I was fully determined, in order to puniſh you, not to let him go ſo ſoon; and unleſs you will come hither, I aſſure you that it will be a long time before you ſhall ſee him. You know it would be very improper to let him ſee the *inſeparables* aſunder.

In truth, Clara, I cannot tell what idle apprehenſions bewitched my mind with reſpect to his coming hither, and I am aſhamed to have oppoſed it with ſuch obſtinacy. As much as I dreaded the ſight of him, I ſhould now be ſorry not to have ſeen him, for his preſence has baniſhed thoſe fears which yet diſturbed me, and which, by fixing my attention conſtantly on him, might at length have given me juſt cauſe of uneaſineſs. I am ſo far from being apprehenſive of the affection I feel for him, that I believe I ſhould miſtruſt myſelf more was he leſs dear to me; but I love him as tenderly as ever, though my love is of a different nature. It is by comparing my preſent ſenſations with thoſe which his preſence formerly occaſioned, that I derive my ſecurity, and the difference of ſuch oppoſite ſentiments is perceived in proportion to their vivacity

With regard to him, though I knew him at the firſt glance, he nevertheleſs appeared to be greatly altered; and what I ſhould formerly have thought impoſſible, he ſeems, in many reſpects, to be changed for the better. On the firſt day,

he diſcovered many ſymptoms of perplexity, and it was with great difficulty that I concealed mine from him. But it was not long before he recovered that free deportment and openneſs of manner which becomes his character. I had always ſeen him timid and baſhful; the fear of offending me, and perhaps the ſecret ſhame of acting a part unbecoming a man of honour, gave him an air of meanneſs and ſervility before me, which you have more than once very juſtly ridiculed. Inſtead of the ſubmiſſion of a ſlave, at preſent he has the reſpectful behaviour of a friend, who knows how to honour the object of his eſteem. He now communicates his ſentiments with freedom and honeſty; he is not afraid leſt his ſevere maxims of virtue ſhould claſh with his intereſt; he is not apprehenſive of injuring himſelf or affecting me, by praiſing what is commendable in itſelf, and one may perceive in all he ſays the confidence of an honeſt man, who can depend upon himſelf, and who derives that approbation from his own conſcience, which he formerly ſought for only in my looks. I find alſo that experience has cured him of that dogmatical and peremptory air which men are apt to contract in their cloſets; that he is leſs forward to judge of mankind, ſince he has obſerved them more; that he is leſs ready to eſtabliſh general propoſitions, ſince he has ſeen ſo many exceptions; and that in general, the love of truth has baniſhed the ſpirit of ſyſtem: ſo that he is become leſs brilliant, but more rational;

and

and one receives much more information from him, now he does not affect to be ſo wiſe.

His figure likewiſe is altered, but nevertheleſs not for the worſe; his countenance is more open, his deportment more ſtately; he has contracted a kind of martial air in his travels, which becomes him the better, as the lively and ſpirited geſture he uſed to expreſs when he was in earneſt is now turned into a more grave and ſober demeanour. He is a ſeaman, whoſe appearance is cold and phlegmatick, but whoſe diſcourſe is fiery and impetuous. Though he is turned of thirty, he has the look of a young man, and joins all the ſpirit of youth to the dignity of manhood. His complexion is entirely altered; he is almoſt as black as a Negro, and very much marked with the ſmall-pox. My dear, I muſt own the truth; I am uneaſy whenever I view thoſe marks, and I catch myſelf looking at them very often in ſpite of me.

I think I can diſcover that if I am curious in examining him, he is not leſs attentive in viewing me. After ſo long an abſence, it is natural to contemplate each other with a kind of curioſity; but if this curioſity may be thought to retain any thing of our former eagerneſs, yet what difference is there in the manner as well as the motive of it! If our looks do not meet ſo often, we nevertheleſs view each other with more freedom. We ſeem to examine each other alternately by a kind of tacit agreement. Each perceives, as it were, when it is the other's turn, and looks a different way, to give the other an

opportunity. Though free from the emotions I formerly felt, yet how is it poſſible to behold with indifference one who inſpired the tendereſt paſſion, and who, to this hour, is the object of the pureſt affection? Who knows whether ſelf-love does not endeavour to juſtify paſt errours? Who knows, whether, though no longer blinded by paſſion, we do not both flatter ourſelves, by ſecretly approving our former choice? Be it as it may, I repeat it without a bluſh, that I feel a more tender affection for him, which will endure to the end of my life. I am ſo far from reproaching myſelf for harbouring theſe ſentiments, that I think they deſerve applauſe; I ſhould bluſh not to perceive them, and conſider it as a defect in my character, and the ſymptom of a bad diſpoſition. With reſpect to him, I dare believe, that next to virtue he loves me beyond any thing in the world. I perceive that he thinks himſelf honoured by my eſteem; I in my turn will regard his in the ſame light, and will merit its continuance. Yes! if you ſaw with what tenderneſs he careſſes my children; if you knew what pleaſure he takes in talking of you, you would find, Clara, that I am ſtill dear to him.

What increaſes my confidence in the opinion we both entertain of him, is that Mr. Wolmar joins with us, and, ſince he has ſeen him, believes, from his own obſervations, all that we have reported to his advantage. He has talked of him much theſe two evenings paſt, congratulating

tulating himſelf on account of the meaſures he has taken, and rallying me for my oppoſition. "No (ſaid he, yeſterday) we will not ſuffer ſo worthy a man to miſtruſt himſelf; we will teach him to have more confidence in his own virtue, and perhaps we may one day or other reap the fruits of our preſent endeavours with more advantage than you imagine. For the preſent, I muſt tell you that I am pleaſed with his character, and that I eſteem him particularly for one circumſtance, which he little ſuſpects, that is, the reſerve with which he behaves towards me. The leſs friendſhip he expreſſes for me, the more he makes me his friend; I cannot tell you how much I dreaded leſt he ſhould load me with careſſes. This was the firſt tryal I prepared for him: there is yet another by which I intend to prove him; and after that I ſhall ceaſe all further examination."—"As to the circumſtance you mentioned (ſaid I) it only proves the frankneſs of his diſpoſition; for he would never reſolve to put on a pliant and ſubmiſſive air before my father, though it was ſo much his intereſt, and I ſo often entreated him to do it. I ſaw with concern that his behaviour deprived him of the only reſource, and yet could not diſlike him for not being able to play the hypocrite on any occaſion."—"The caſe is very different (replied my huſband:) there is a natural antipathy between your father and him, founded on the oppoſition of their ſentiments. With regard to myſelf, who have no ſymptoms or prejudices, I am cer-

tain that he can have no natural averſion to me. No one can hate me; a man without paſſions cannot inſpire any one with an averſion towards him: but I deprived him of the object of his wiſhes, which he will not readily forgive. He will, however, conceive the ſtronger affection for me, when he is perfectly convinced that the injury I have done him does not prevent me from looking upon him with an eye of kindneſs. If he careſſed me now, he would be a hypocrite; if he never careſſes me, he will be a monſter."

Such, my dear Clara, is the ſituation we are in, and I begin to think that heaven will bleſs the integrity of our hearts, and the kind intentions of my huſband. But I am too kind to you in entering into all theſe details: you do not deſerve that I ſhould take ſuch pleaſure in converſing with you; but I am determined to tell you no more, and if you deſire further information, you muſt come hither to receive it.

P. S.—I muſt acquaint you nevertheleſs with what has paſſed with reſpect to the ſubject of this letter. You know with what indulgence Mr. Wolmar received the late confeſſion which our friend's unexpected return obliged me to make. You ſaw with what tenderneſs he endeavoured to dry up my tears, and diſpel my ſhame. Whether, as you reaſonably conjectured, I told him nothing new, or whether he was really affected by a proceeding which nothing but ſincere repentance could dictate, he has not only continued to live with me as before,

before, but he even ſeems to have increaſed his attention, his confidence, and eſteem, as if he meant, by his kindneſs, to repay the confuſion which my confeſſion coſt me. My dear Clara, you know my heart; judge then what an impreſſion ſuch a conduct muſt make!

As ſoon as I found that he was determined to let our old friend come hither, I reſolved, on my part, to take the beſt precautions I could contrive againſt myſelf: which was, to chooſe my huſband himſelf for my confidant; to hold no particular converſation which I did not communicate to him, and to write no letter which I did not ſhow to him. I even made it a part of my duty to write every letter as if it was not intended for his inſpection, and afterwards to ſhow it to him. You will find an article in this which was penned on this principle; if while I was writing I could not forbear thinking that he might read it, yet my conſcience bears witneſs that I did not alter a ſingle word on that account; but when I ſhowed him my letter, he bantered me, and had not the civility to read it.

I confeſs that I was ſomewhat piqued at his refuſal; as if he had doubted my honour. My emotion did not eſcape his notice, and this moſt open and generous man ſoon removed my apprehenſion. "Confeſs (ſaid he) that you have ſaid leſs concerning me than uſual in that letter. I owned; was it decent to ſay much of him, when I intended to ſhow him what I had written?"

ten?"—"Well (he replied, with a ſmile) I had rather that you would talk of me more, and not know what you ſay of me." Afterwards, he continued, in a more ſerious tone: "Marriage (ſaid he) is too grave and ſolemn a ſtate to admit of that free communication which tender friendſhip allows. The latter connexion often happily contributes to moderate the rigour of the former; and it may be reaſonable in ſome caſes for a virtuous and diſcreet woman to ſeek for that comfort, intelligence, and advice from a faithful confidant, which it might not be proper for her to deſire of her huſband. Though nothing paſſes between you but what you would chooſe to communicate, yet take care not to make it a duty, leſt that duty ſhould become a reſtraint upon you, and your correſpondence grow leſs agreeable by being more diffuſive. Believe me, the open-hearted ſincerity of friendſhip is reſtrained by the preſence of a witneſs, whoever it be. There are a thouſand ſecrets of which three friends ought to participate; but which cannot be communicated but between two. You may impart the ſame things to your friend and to your huſband, but you do not relate them in the ſame manner; and if you will confound theſe diſtinctions, the conſequence will be, that your letters will be addreſſed more to me than her, and that you will not be free from reſtraint either with one or the other. It is as much for my own intereſt as for your's that I urge theſe reaſons. Do not you perceive

that

that you are already, with good reaſon, apprehenſive of the indelicacy of praiſing me to my face? Why will you deprive yourſelf of the pleaſure of acquainting your friend how tenderly you love your huſband, and me of the ſatisfaction of ſuppoſing, that in your moſt private intercourſes you take delight in ſpeaking well of me! Eloiſa! Eloiſa! (he added, preſſing my hand, and looking at me with tenderneſs) why will you demean yourſelf, by taking precautions ſo unworthy of you, and will you never learn to make a true eſtimate of your own worth?"

My dear friend, it is impoſſible to tell you how this incomparable man behaves to me: I no longer bluſh in his preſence. Spite of my frailty, he lifts me above myſelf, and, by dint of repoſing confidence in me, teaches me to deſerve it.

LETTER CXXVII.

THE ANSWER.

IMPOSSIBLE! our traveller returned, and have I not yet ſeen him at my feet, loaded with the ſpoils of America? But it is not him, I aſſure you, whom I accuſe of this delay; for I am ſenſible it is as grievous to him as to me: but I find that he has not ſo thoroughly forgotten his former ſtate of ſervility as you pretend, and I complain leſs of his neglect, than

of your tyranny. It is very extraordinary in you, indeed, to deſire ſuch a prude as I am to make the firſt advances, and run to ſalute a ſwarthy pock-fretten face, which has paſſed four times under the line. But you make me ſmile to ſee you in ſuch haſte to ſcold, for fear I ſhould begin firſt. I ſhould be glad to know what pretence you have to make ſuch an attempt? Quarrelling is my talent. I take pleaſure in it, I acquit myſelf to a miracle, and it becomes me; but you, my dear couſin, are a mere novice at this work. If you did but know how graceful you appear in the act of confeſſion, how lovely you look with a ſupplicating eye, and an air of confuſion, inſtead of ſcolding, you would ſpend your days in aſking pardon, were it only out of coquetry.

For the preſent, you muſt aſk my pardon in every reſpect. A fine project truely, to chooſe a huſband for a confidant, and a more obliging precaution indeed for a friendſhip ſo ſacred as our's! Thou faithleſs friend, and puſillanimous woman! on whom can you depend, if you miſtruſt yourſelf and me? Can you, without offenſe to both, conſidering the ſacred tie under which you live, ſuſpect your own inclinations and my indulgence? I am amazed that the very idea of admitting a third perſon into the tittle-tattle ſecrets of two women did not diſguſt you? As for my part, I love to prattle with you at my eaſe, but if I thought that the eye of man ever pryed into my letters, I ſhould no longer

longer have any pleaſure in correſponding with you; ſuch a reſerve would inſenſibly introduce a coldneſs between us, and we ſhould have no more regard for each other than two indifferent women. To what inconveniences your ſilly diſtruſt would have expoſed us, if your huſband had not been wiſer than you.

He acted very diſcreetly in not reading your letter. Perhaps, he would have been leſs ſatisfied with it than you imagine, and leſs than I am myſelf, who am better capable of judging of your preſent condition, by the ſtate in which I have ſeen you formerly. All thoſe contemplative ſages who have paſſed their lives in the ſtudy of the human heart are leſs acquainted with the real ſymptoms of love than the moſt ſhallow woman, if ſhe has any ſenſibility. Mr. Wolmar would immediately have obſerved that our friend was the ſubject of your whole letter, and he would not have ſeen the poſtſcript, in which you do not once mention him. If you had written this poſtſcript ten years ago, my dear, I cannot tell how you would have managed, but your friend would certainly have been crowded into ſome corner, eſpecially as there was no huſband to overlook it.

Mr. Wolmar would have obſerved further with what attention you examined his gueſt, and the pleaſure you take in deſcribing his perſon; but he might devour Plato and Ariſtotle, before he would know that we *look at* a lover, but do not *examine* him. All examination requires a de-

gree of indifference, which we never feel when we behold the object of our paſſion.

In ſhort, he would imagine that all the alterations you remark might have eſcaped another, and I, on the contrary, was afraid of finding that they had eſcaped you. However your gueſt may be altered from what he was, he would appear the ſame, if your affections were not altered. You turn away your eyes whenever he looks at you; this is a very good ſymptom. You *turn them away*, couſin? You do not now *caſt them down?* Surely you have not miſtaken one word for another. Do you think that our philoſopher would have perceived this diſtinction?

There is another circumſtance very likely to diſturb a huſband; it is a kind of tenderneſs and affection which ſtill remains in your ſtile, when you ſpeak of the object who was once ſo dear to you. One who reads your letters, or hears you ſpeak, ought to be well acquainted with you, not to be miſtaken with regard to your ſentiments; he ought to know that it is only a friend of whom you are ſpeaking, or that you ſpeak in the ſame manner of all your friends; but as to that, it is the natural effect of your diſpoſition, with which your huſband is too well acquainted to be alarmed. How is it poſſible but that, in a mind of ſuch tenderneſs, pure friendſhip will bear ſome reſemblance to love? Pray obſerve, my dear couſin, that all I ſay to you on this head ought to inſpire you with freſh courage:

courage: your conduct is diſcreet, and that is a great deal; I uſed to truſt only to your virtue, but I begin now to rely on your reaſon; I conſider your cure at preſent, though not perfect, yet as eaſy to be accompliſhed, and you have now made a ſufficient progreſs, to render you inexcuſable if you do not complete it.

Before I came to your poſtcript, I remarked the paſſage which you had the ſincerity not to ſuppreſs or alter, though conſcious that it would be open to your huſband's inſpection. I am certain, that if he had read it, it would, if poſſible, have doubled his eſteem for you; nevertheleſs it would have given him no great pleaſure. Upon the whole, your letter was very well calculated to make him place an entire confidence in your conduct, but at the ſame time it tended to give him uneaſineſs with reſpect to your inclinations. I own, thoſe marks of the ſmall-pox, which you view ſo much, give me ſome apprehenſions; love never yet contrived a more dangerous diſguiſe. I know that this would be of no conſequence to any other; but always remember, Eloiſa, that ſhe who was not to be ſeduced by the youth and fine figure of her lover was loſt when ſhe reflected on the ſufferings he had endured for her. Providence no doubt intended that he ſhould retain the marks of that diſtemper, to exerciſe your virtue, and that you ſhould be free from them, in order to put his to the proof.

I come

I come now to the principal ſubject of your letter; you know that on the receipt of our friend's, I flew to you immediately; it was a matter of importance. But at preſent, if you knew in what difficulties that ſhort abſence has involved me, and how many things I have to do at once, you would be ſenſible how impoſſible it is for me to leave my houſe again, without expoſing myſelf to freſh inconveniencies, and putting myſelf under a neceſſity of paſſing the winter here again, which is neither for your intereſt or mine. Is it not better to deprive ourſelves of the pleaſures of a haſty interview of two or three days, that we may be together for ſix months? I imagine likewiſe that it would not be improper for me to have a little particular and private converſation with our philoſopher: partly to ſound his inclinations and confirm his mind; partly to give him ſome uſeful advice with regard to the conduct he ſhould obſerve towards your huſband, and even towards you; for I do not ſuppoſe that you can talk to him with freedom on that ſubject, and I can perceive, even from your letter, that he has need of counſel. We have been ſo long uſed to govern him, that we are in conſcience reſponſible for his behaviour; and till he has regained the free uſe of his reaſon, we muſt ſupply the deficiency. For my own part, it is a charge I ſhall always undertake with pleaſure; for he has paid ſuch deference to my advice as I ſhall never forget, and ſince my huſband is no more, there

there is not a man in the world whom I eſteem and love ſo much as himſelf. I have likewiſe reſerved for him the pleaſure of doing me ſome little ſervices here. I have a great many papers in confuſion, which he will help me to regulate, and I have ſome troubleſome affairs in hand, in which I ſhall have occaſion for his diligence and underſtanding. As to the reſt, I do not propoſe to detain him above five or ſix days at moſt, and perhaps I may ſend him to you the next day. For I have too much vanity to wait till he is ſeiſed with impatience to return, and I have too much diſcernment to be deceived in that caſe.

Do not fail, therefore, as ſoon as he is recovered, to ſend him to me; that is, to let him come, or I ſhall give over all raillery. You know very well, that if I laugh whilſt I cry, and yet am not the leſs in affliction, ſo I laugh likewiſe at the ſame time that I ſcold, and yet am not the leſs in a paſſion. If you are diſcreet, and do things with a good grace, I promiſe you that I will ſend him back to you with a pretty little preſent, which will give you pleaſure, and a great deal of pleaſure; but if you ſuffer me to languiſh with impatience, I aſſure you that you ſhall have nothing.

P. S.—A propos; tell me, does our ſeaman ſmoke? Does he ſwear? Does he drink brandy? Does he wear a great cutlaſs? Has he the look of a Buccaneer? Oh! how I long to ſee what ſort of

of an air a man has who comes from the Antipodes!

LETTER CXXVIII.

CLARA TO ELOISA.

HERE! take back your ſlave, my dear couſin. He has been mine for theſe eight days paſt, and he bears his chains with ſo good a grace, that he ſeems formed for captivity. Return me thanks that I did not keep him ſtill eight days longer; for without offenſe to you, if I had kept him till he began to grow tired of me, I ſhould not have ſent him back ſo ſoon. I, therefore, detained him without any ſcruple; but I was ſo ſcrupulous, however, that I durſt not let him lodge in my houſe. I have ſometimes perceived in myſelf that haughtineſs of ſoul, which diſdains ſervile ceremonies, and which is ſo conſiſtent with virtue. In this inſtance, however, I have been more reſerved than uſual, without knowing why: and all that I know for certain is, that I am more diſpoſed to cenſure than to applaud my reſerve.

But can you gueſs what induced our friend to ſtay here ſo patiently? Firſt, he had the pleaſure of my company, and I preſume that circumſtance alone was ſufficient to make him patient. Then he ſaved me a great deal of confuſion, and was of ſervice to me in my buſineſs; a friend is never tired of ſuch offices. A third reaſon,

reaſon, which you have probably conjectured, though you pretend not to know it, is that he talked to me about you; and if we ſubtract the time employed in this converſation from the whole time which he has paſſed here, you will find that there is very little remaining to be placed to my account. But what an odd whim, to leave you, in order to have the pleaſure of talking of you! Not ſo odd as may be imagined. He is under conſtraint in your company; he muſt be continually upon his guard; the leaſt indiſcretion would become a crime, and in thoſe dangerous moments, minds endued with ſentiments of honour never fail to recollect their duty; but when we are remote from the object of our affections, we may indulge ourſelves with feaſting our imaginations. If we ſtifle an idea when it becomes criminal, why ſhould we reproach ourſelves for having entertained it when it was not ſo? Can the pleaſing recollection of innocent pleaſures ever be a crime? This, I imagine, is a way of reaſoning, which you will not acquieſce in, but which, nevertheleſs, may be admitted. He began, as I may ſay, to run over the whole courſe of his former affections. The days of his youth paſſed over a ſecond time in our converſation. He renewed all his confidence in me; he recalled the happy time, in which he was permitted to love you; he painted to my imagination all the charms of an innocent paſſion——Without doubt, he embelliſhed them!

He

He ſaid little of his preſent condition with regard to you, and what he mentioned rather denoted reſpect and admiration, than love; ſo that I have the pleaſure to think that he will return, much more confident as to the nature of his affections than when we came hither. Not but that, when you are the ſubject, one may perceive at the bottom of that ſuſceptible mind a certain tenderneſs, which friendſhip alone, though not leſs affecting, ſtill expreſſes in a different manner; but I have long obſerved that it is impoſſible to ſee you, or to think of you with indifference; and if to that general affection which the ſight of you inſpires, we add the more tender impreſſion which an indelible recollection muſt have left upon his mind, we ſhall find that it is difficult and almoſt impoſſible that, with the moſt rigid virtue, he ſhould be otherwiſe than he is. I have fully interrogated him, carefully obſerved him, and watched him narrowly; I have examined him with the utmoſt attention. I cannot read his inmoſt thoughts, nor do I believe them more intelligible to himſelf: but I can anſwer, at leaſt, that he is ſtruck with a ſenſe of his duty and of your's, and that the idea of Eloiſa abandoned and contemptible would be more horrid than his own annihilation. My dear couſin, I have but one piece of advice to give you, and I deſire you to attend to it—avoid any detail concerning what is paſſed, and I will take upon me to anſwer for the future.

With

With regard to the reſtitution which you mentioned, you muſt think no more of it. After having exhauſted all the reaſons I could ſuggeſt, I entreated him, preſſed him, conjured him, but in vain. I pouted, I even kiſſed him, I took hold of both his hands, and would have fallen on my knees to him, if he would have ſuffered me; but he would not ſo much as hear me. He carried the obſtinacy of his humour ſo far, as to ſwear that he would ſooner conſent never to ſee you again, than part with your picture. At laſt, in a fit of paſſion, he made me feel it. It was next his heart. "There (ſaid he, with a ſigh which almoſt ſtopped his breath) there is the picture, the only comfort I have left, and of which nevertheleſs you would deprive me: be aſſured that it ſhall never be torn from me, but at the expenſe of my life." Believe me, Eloiſa, we had better be diſcreet, and ſuffer him to keep the picture. After all, where is the importance? His obſtinacy will be his puniſhment.

After he had thoroughly unburthened and eaſed his mind, he appeared ſo compoſed, that I ventured to talk to him about his ſituation. I found that neither time nor reaſon had made any alteration in his ſyſtem, and that he confined his whole ambition to the paſſing his life in the ſervice of Lord B——. I could not but approve ſuch honourable intentions, ſo conſiſtent with his character, and ſo becoming that gratitude which is due to ſuch unexhauſted kindneſs.

kindneſs. He told me that you were of the ſame opinion; but that Mr. Wolmar was ſilent. A ſudden thought ſtrikes me. From your huſband's ſingular conduct, and other ſymptoms, I ſuſpect that he has ſome ſecret deſign upon our friend, which he does not diſcloſe. Let us leave him to himſelf, and truſt to his diſcretion. The manner in which he behaves ſufficiently proves that, if my conjecture is right, he meditates nothing but what will be for the advantage of the perſon about whom he has taken ſuch uncommon pains.

You gave a very juſt deſcription of his figure and of his manners, which proves that you have obſerved him more attentively than I ſhould have imagined. But don't you find that his continued anxieties have rendered his countenance more expreſſive than it uſed to be? Notwithſtanding the account you gave me, I was afraid to find him tinctured with that affected politeneſs, thoſe apiſh manners which people ſeldom fail to contract at Paris, and which, in the round of trifles which employ an indolent day, are vainly diſplayed under different modes. Whether it be that ſome minds are not ſuſceptible of this poliſh, or whether the ſea air entirely effaced it, I could not diſcover in him the leaſt marks of affectation; and all the zeal he expreſſed for me ſeemed to flow entirely from the dictates of his heart. He talked to me about my poor huſband; but inſtead of comforting me, he choſe to join with me in bewailing him, and

and never once attempted to make any fine ſpeeches on the ſubject. He careſſed my daughter, but inſtead of admiring her as I do, he reproached me with her failings, and, like you, complained that I ſpoiled her; he entered into my concerns with great zeal, and was ſeldom of my opinion in any reſpect. Moreover, the wind might have blown my eyes out, before he would have thought of drawing a curtain; I might have been fatigued to death in going from one room to another, before he would have had gallantry enough to have ſtretched out his hand, covered with the ſkirt of his coat, to ſupport me: my fan lay upon the ground yeſterday for more than a ſecond, and he did not fly from the bottom of the room, as if he was going to ſnatch it out of the fire. In the morning, before he came to viſit me, he never once ſent to enquire how I did. When we are walking together, he does not affect to have his hat nailed upon his head, to ſhow that he knows the pink of the mode*. At table, I frequently aſked him for his ſnuff-box, which he always gave me in his hand, and never preſented it upon a plate, like a *fine*

* At Paris, they pique themſelves on rendering ſociety eaſy and commodious; and this eaſe is made to conſiſt of a great number of rules, equally important with the above. In good company, every thing is regulated according to form and order. All theſe ceremonies are in and out of faſhion as quick as lightning. The ſcience of polite life conſiſts in being always upon the watch, to ſeiſe them as they fly, to affect them, and ſhow that we are acquainted with the mode of the day.

a *fine gentleman*; or rather like a footman. He did not fail to drink my health twice at leaſt at dinner, and I will lay a wager, that if he ſtays with us this winter, we ſhall ſee him ſit round the fire with us, and warm himſelf like an old cit. You laugh, couſin; but ſhow me one of our gallants newly arrived from Paris, who preſerves the ſame manly deportment. As to the reſt, I think you muſt allow that our philoſopher is altered for the worſe in one reſpect, which is, that he takes rather more notice of people who ſpeak to him, which he cannot do but to your prejudice; nevertheleſs, I hope that I ſhall be able to reconcile him to Madam Belon. For my part, I think him altered for the better, becauſe he is more ſerious than ever. My dear, take great care of him till my arrival. He is juſt the man I could wiſh to have the pleaſure of plaguing all day long.

Admire my diſcretion; I have taken no notice yet of the preſent I ſent you, and which is an earneſt of another to come. But you have received it before you opened my letter, and you know how much, and with what reaſon I idoliſe it; you, whoſe avarice is ſo anxious about this preſent, you muſt acknowledge that I have performed more than I promiſed. Ah! the dear little creature! While you are reading this, ſhe is already in your arms; ſhe is happier than her mother; but in two months time I ſhall be happier than ſhe, for I ſhall be more ſenſible of my felicity. Alas! dear couſin, do not you poſſeſs me

me wholly already? Where you and my daughter are, what part of me is wanting? There ſhe is, the dear little infant; take her as your own; I give her up; I put her into your hands; I conſign all maternal authority over to you; correct my failings; take that charge upon yourſelf, of which I acquitted myſelf ſo little to your liking: henceforward, be as a mother to her, who is one day to be your daughter-in-law; and to render her dearer to me ſtill, make another Eloiſa of her if poſſible. She is like you in the face already; as to her temper, I gueſs that ſhe, will be grave and thoughtful; when you have corrected thoſe little caprices which I have been accuſed of encouraging, you will find that my daughter will give herſelf the airs of my couſin; but ſhe will be happier than Eloiſa in having leſs tears to ſhed, and leſs ſtruggles to encounter. Do you know that ſhe can't be any longer without her little M—, and that it is partly for that reaſon I ſend her back? I had a converſation with her yeſterday, which threw our friend into an immoderate fit of laughing. Firſt, ſhe leaves me without the leaſt regret; I, who am her humble ſervant all day long, and can deny her nothing ſhe aſks for; and you, of whom ſhe is afraid, and who anſwer her *No* twenty times a day; you, by way of excellence, are her little mama, whom ſhe viſits with pleaſure, and whoſe denials ſhe likes better than all my fine preſents: when I told her that I was going to ſend her to you, ſhe was tranſported, as you may imagine; but

to

to perplex her, I told her that you in return was to ſend me little M— in her ſtead, and that was not agreeable to her. She was quite at a non-plus, and aſked what I would do with him. I told her that I would take him to myſelf: ſhe began to pout. "Harriet (ſaid I) won't you give up your little M— to me?"—"No (ſaid ſhe, ſomewhat coldly.) "No? But if I won't give him up neither, who ſhall ſettle it between us?"—"Mama, my little mama ſhall ſettle it."—"Then I ſhall have the preference, for you know ſhe will do whatever I deſire."—"Oh, but mama will do nothing but what is right!"—"And do you think I ſhould deſire what's wrong?" The ſly little jade began to ſmile. "But after all (I continued) for what reaſon ſhould ſhe refuſe to give me little M—?"—"Becauſe he is not fit for you."—"And why is he not fit for me? (Another arch ſmile, as full of meaning as the former.) Tell me honeſtly, is it not becauſe you think me too old for him?"—"No, mama, but he is too young for you." . . . . . This from a child but ſeven years old. . . .

I amuſed myſelf with piquing her ſtill further. "My dear Harriet (ſaid I, aſſuming a ſerious air) I aſſure you that he is not fit for you neither." "Why ſo?" (ſhe cried, as if ſhe had been ſuddenly alarmed.)—"Becauſe he is too giddy for you"—"Oh, mama, is that all? I will make him wife." "But if unfortunately he ſhould make you fooliſh."—"Then, mama, I ſhould be like you."—"Like me, impertinence?"—"Yes, mama,

you are ſaying all day that you are fooliſhly fond of me."—"Well then, I will be fooliſhly fond of him, that is all."

I know you don't approve of this pretty prattle, and that you will ſoon know how to check it. Neither will I juſtify it, though I own it delights me; but I only mention it, to convince you that my daughter is already in love with her little M——, and that if he is two years younger, ſhe is not unworthy of that authority which ſhe may claim by right of ſeniority. I perceive likewiſe, by oppoſing your example and my own to that of your poor mother's, that where the woman governs the houſe is not the worſe managed. Farewell, my dear friend; farewell, my conſtant companion! The time is approaching, and the vintage ſhall not be gathered without me.

LETTER CXXIX.

TO LORD B——

WHAT pleaſures, too late enjoyed (alas! enjoyed too late) have I taſted theſe three weeks paſt! How delightful to paſs one day in the boſom of calm friendſhip, ſecure from the tempeſts of impetuous paſſion! What a pleaſing and affecting ſcene, my lord, is a plain and well-regulated family, where order, peace, and innocence reign throughout; where, without pomp or retinue, every thing is aſſembled which can contribute to the real felicity of mankind!

kind! The country, the retirement, the ſeaſon, the vaſt body of water which opens to my view, the wild proſpect of the mountains, every thing conſpires to recall to my mind the delightful iſland of Tinian. I flatter myſelf that the earneſt prayers which I there ſo often repeated are now accompliſhed. I live here agreeably to my taſte, and enjoy ſociety ſuitable to my liking. I only want the company of two perſons to complete my happineſs, and I hope to ſee them here ſoon.

In the mean time, till you and Mrs. Orbe come to perfect thoſe charming and innocent pleaſures which I begin to reliſh here, I will endeavour, by way of detail, to give you an idea of that domeſtick œconomy which proclaims the happineſs of the maſter and miſtreſs, and communicates their felicity to every one under their roof. I hope that my reflexions may one day be of uſe to you, with reſpect to the project you have in view, and this hope encourages me to purſue them.

I need not give you a deſcription of Clarens houſe. You know it. You can tell how delightful it is, what intereſting recollections it preſents to my mind; you can judge how dear it muſt be to me, both on account of the preſent ſcenes it exhibits, and of thoſe which it recalls to my mind. Mrs. Wolmar, with good reaſon, prefers this abode to that of Etange, a ſuperb and magnificent caſtle, but old, inconvenient, and gloomy, its ſituation being far inferior to the country round Clarens.

Since

Since Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar have fixed their reſidence here, they have converted to uſe every thing which ſerved only for ornament: it is no longer a houſe for ſhow, but for convenience. They have ſhut up a long range of rooms, to alter the inconvenient ſituation of the doors; they have cut off others that were over-ſized, that the apartments might be better diſtributed. Inſtead of rich and antique furniture, they have ſubſtituted what is neat and convenient. Every thing here is pleaſant and agreeable; every thing breathes an air of plenty and propriety, without any appearance of pomp and luxury. There is not a ſingle room, in which you do not immediately recollect that you are in the country, but in which, nevertheleſs, you will find all the conveniencies you meet with in town. The ſame alterations are obſervable without doors. The yard has been enlarged at the expenſe of the coach-houſes. Inſtead of an old tattered billiard-table, they have made a fine preſs, and the ſpot which uſed to be filled with ſcreaming peacocks, which they have parted with, is converted into a dairy. The kitchen-garden was too ſmall for the kitchen; they have made another out of a flower-garden, but ſo convenient, and ſo well laid out, that the ſpot, thus transformed, looks more agreeable to the eye than before. Inſtead of the mournful yews which covered the wall, they have planted good fruit-trees. In the room of the uſeleſs Indian *black-berry*, fine young mulberry-trees

now begin to ſhade the yard, and they have planted two rows of walnut-trees quite to the road, in the place of ſome old linden-trees which bordered the avenue. They have throughout ſubſtituted the uſeful in the room of the agreeable, and yet the agreeable has gained by the alteration. For my own part, at leaſt, I think that the noiſes in the yard, ſuch as the crowing of the cocks, the lowing of the cattle, the harneſs of the carts, the rural repaſts, the return of the huſbandmen, and all the train of ruſtick œconomy, give the houſe a more lively, animated, and gay appearance, than it had in its former ſtate of mournful dignity.

Their eſtate is not out upon leaſe, but they are their own farmers, and the cultivation of it employs a great deal of their time, and makes a great part both of their pleaſure and profit. The manour of Etange is nothing but meadow, paſture, and wood: but the produce of Clarens conſiſts of vineyards, which are conſiderable objects, and in which the difference of culture produces more ſenſible effects than in corn; which is a further reaſon why, in point of œconomy, they ſhould prefer the latter as a place of reſidence. Nevertheleſs, they generally go to Etange every year at harveſt-time, and Mr. Wolmar viſits it frequently. It is a maxim with them, to cultivate their lands to the utmoſt they will produce, not for the ſake of extraordinary profit, but as the means of employing more hands. Mr. Wolmar maintains, that the produce of the earth

earth is in proportion to the number of hands employed; the better it is tilled, the more it yields; and the ſurplus of its produce furniſhes the means of cultivating it ſtill further; the more it is ſtocked with men and cattle, the greater abundance it yields for their ſupport. No one can tell, ſays he, where this continual and reciprocal increaſe of produce and of labour may end. On the contrary, land neglected loſes its fertility, the fewer men a country produces, the leſs proviſion it furniſhes, the ſcarcity of inhabitants is the reaſon why it is inſufficient to maintain the few it has, and in every country which tends to depopulation, the people will ſooner or later die of famine.

Therefore, having a great deal of land, which they cultivate with the utmoſt induſtry, they require, beſides the ſervants in the yard, a great number of day-labourers, which procures them the pleaſure of maintaining a great number of people without any inconvenience to themſelves. In the choice of their labourers, they always prefer their neighbours, and thoſe of the ſame place, to ſtrangers and foreigners. Though by this means they may ſometimes be loſers in not chooſing the moſt robuſt, yet this loſs is ſoon made up by the affection which this preference inſpires in thoſe whom they chooſe, by the advantage likewiſe of having them always about them, and of being able to depend on them at all times, though they keep them in pay but part of the year.

They always make two prices with theſe labourers. One is a ſtrict payment of right, the current price of the country, which they engage to pay them when they hire them. The other, which is more liberal, is a payment of generoſity; it is beſtowed only as they are found to deſerve it, and it ſeldom happens that they do not earn the ſurplus; for Mr. Wolmar is juſt and ſtrict, and never ſuffers inſtitutions of grace and favour to degenerate into cuſtom and abuſe. Over theſe labourers there are overſeers, who watch and encourage them. Theſe overſeers work along with the reſt; and are intereſted in their labour, by a little augmentation which is made to their wages for every advantage that is reaped from their induſtry. Beſides, Mr. Wolmar viſits them almoſt every day himſelf, ſometimes often in a day, and his wife loves to take theſe walks with him. In times of extraordinary buſineſs, Eloiſa every week beſtows ſome little gratifications to ſuch of the labourers, or other ſervants, as, in the judgement of their maſter, have been moſt induſtrious for the paſt week. All theſe means of promoting emulation, though ſeemingly expenſive, when uſed with juſtice and diſcretion, inſenſibly make people laborious and diligent; and in the end bring in more than is diſburſed; but as they turn to no profit, but by time and perſeverance, few people know any thing of them, or are willing to make uſe of them.

But

But the moſt effectual method of all, which is peculiar to Mrs. Wolmar, and which they who are bent on œconomy ſeldom think of, is that of gaining the hearts of thoſe good people, by making them the objects of her affection. She does not think it ſufficient to reward their induſtry, by giving them money, but ſhe thinks herſelf bound to do further ſervices to thoſe who have contributed to her's. Labourers, domeſticks, all who ſerve her, if it be but for a day, become her children; ſhe takes part in their pleaſures, their cares, and their fortune; ſhe enquires into their affairs; and makes their intereſt her own; ſhe engages in a thouſand concerns for them, ſhe gives them her advice, ſhe compoſes their differences, and does not ſhow the affability of her diſpoſition in ſmooth and fruitleſs ſpeeches, but in real ſervices, and continual acts of benevolence. They, on their parts, leave every thing, to ſerve her, on the leaſt motion. They fly when ſhe ſpeaks to them; her look alone animates their zeal; in her preſence they are contented; in her abſence they talk of her, and are eager to be employed. Her charms, and her manner of converſing, do a great deal, but her gentleneſs and her virtues more. Ah! my lord, what a powerful and adorable empire is that of benevolent beauty!

With reſpect to their perſonal attendants, they have within doors eight ſervants, three women and five men, without reckoning the Ba-

ron's valet-de-chambre, or the ſervants in the out-houſes. It ſeldom happens that people who have but few domeſticks are ill ſerved; but from the uncommon zeal of theſe ſervants, one would conclude that each thought himſelf charged with the buſineſs of the other ſeven, and from the harmony among them, one would imagine that the whole buſineſs was done by one man. You never ſee them in the out-houſes idle and unemployed, or playing in the court-yard, but always about ſome uſeful employment; they aſſiſt in the yard, in the cellar, and in the kitchen. The gardener has nobody under him but them, and what is moſt agreeable, you ſee them do all this chearfully, and with pleaſure.

They take them young, in order to form them to their minds. They do not follow the maxim here, which prevails at Paris and London, of chooſing domeſticks ready formed, that is to ſay, complete raſcals, runners of quality, who, in every family they go through, catch the failings both of maſter and man, and make a trade of ſerving every body, without being attached to any one. There can be neither honeſty, fidelity, or zeal among ſuch fellows, and this collection of rabble ſerves to ruin the maſters, and corrupt the children, in all wealthy families. Here, the choice of domeſticks is conſidered as an article of importance. They do not regard them merely as mercenaries, from whom they only require a ſtipulated ſervice, but as members of a family, which, ſhould they be ill choſen, might

might be ruined by that means. The firſt thing they require of them is to be honeſt, the next is to love their maſter, and the third to ſerve him to his liking; but where a maſter is reaſonable, and a ſervant intelligent, the third is the conſequence of the two firſt. Therefore, they do not take them from town, but from the country. This is the firſt place they live in, and it will aſſuredly be the laſt, if they are good for any thing. They take them out of ſome numerous family overſtocked with children, whoſe parents come to offer them of their own accord. They chooſe them young, well made, healthy, and of a pleaſant countenance. Mr. Wolmar interrogates and examines them, and then preſents them to his wife. If they prove agreeable to both, they are received at firſt upon tryal, afterwards they are admitted among the number of ſervants, or more properly the children of the family, and they employ ſome days in teaching them their duty with a great deal of care and patience. The ſervice is ſo ſimple, ſo equal and uniform, the maſter and miſtreſs are ſo little ſubject to whims and caprice, and the ſervants ſo ſoon conceive an affection for them, that their buſineſs is ſoon learnt. Their condition is agreeable; they find conveniencies which they had not at home; but they are not ſuffered to be enervated by idleneſs, the parent of all vice. They do not allow them to become gentlemen, and to grow proud in their ſervice. They continue to work as they did with their own family; in fact, they do but change their father and mo-

ther, and get more wealthy parents. They do not therefore, hold their old ruſtick employments in contempt. Whenever they leave this place, there is not one of them who had not rather turn peaſant, than take any other employment. In ſhort, I never ſaw a family, where every one acquits himſelf ſo well in his ſervice, and thinks ſo little of the trouble of ſervitude.

Thus, by training up their ſervants themſelves, in this diſcreet manner, they guard againſt the objection which is ſo very trifling, and ſo frequently made, viz. "I ſhall only bring them "up for the ſervice of others." Train them properly, one might anſwer, and they will never ſerve any one elſe. If in bringing them up, you ſolely regard your own benefit, they have a right to conſult their own intereſt in quitting you; but if you ſeem to conſider their advantage, they will remain conſtantly attached to you. It is the intention alone which conſtitutes the obligation, and he who is indirectly benefitted by an act of kindneſs, wherein I meant to ſerve myſelf only, owes me no obligation whatever.

As a double preventive againſt this inconvenience, Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar take another method, which appears to me extremely prudent. At the firſt eſtabliſhment of their houſehold, they calculated what number of ſervants their fortune would allow them to keep, and they found it to amount to fifteen or ſixteen; in order to be better ſerved, they made a reduction of half that number; ſo that with leſs retinue, their ſervice is more exactly attended. To be more effectually

ually ſerved ſtill, they have made it the intereſt of their ſervants to continue with them a long time. When a domeſtick firſt enters into their ſervice, he receives the common wages; but thoſe wages are augmented every year by a twentieth part; ſo that at the end of twenty years, they will be more than doubled, and the charge of keeping theſe ſervants will be nearly the ſame, in proportion to the maſter's circumſtances. But there is no need of being a deep algebraiſt to diſcover that the expenſe of this augmentation is more in appearance than reality, that there will be but few to whom double wages will be paid, and that if they were paid to all the ſervants, yet the benefit of having been well ſerved for twenty years paſt would more than compenſate the extraordinary expenſe. You perceive, my lord, that this is a certain expedient of making ſervants grow continually more and more careful, and of attaching them to you, by attaching yourſelf to them. There is not only prudence, but juſtice, in ſuch a proviſion. Is it reaſonable that a new-comer, who has no affection for you, and who is perhaps an unworthy object, ſhould receive the ſame ſalary, at his firſt enterance into the family, as an old ſervant, whoſe zeal and fidelity have been tried in a long courſe of ſervices, and who beſides, being grown in years, draws near the time when he will be incapable of providing for himſelf? The latter reaſon, however, muſt not be brought into the account, and you may eaſily imagine that ſuch a benevolent maſter and miſtreſs do not fail

to diſcharge that duty, which many, who are devoid of charity, fulfil out of oſtentation; and you may ſuppoſe that they do not abandon thoſe whoſe infirmities or old age render them incapable of ſervice.

I can give you a very ſtriking inſtance of their attention to this duty. The Baron d'Etange, being deſirous to recompenſe the long ſervices of his valet-de-chambre, by procuring him an honourable retreat, had the intereſt to obtain for him the L. S. E. E. an eaſy and lucrative poſt. Eloiſa has juſt now received a moſt affecting letter from this old ſervant, in which he entreats her to get him excuſed from accepting this employment. "I am in years (ſays he): I have loſt all my family; I have no relations but my maſter and his family; all my hope is to end my days quietly in the houſe where I have paſſed the greateſt part of them. Often, dear madam, as I have held you in my arms when but an infant, I prayed to heaven that I might one day hold your little ones in the ſame manner. My prayers have been heard; do not deny me the happineſs of ſeeing them grow and proſper like you. I who have been accuſtomed to a quiet family, where ſhall I find ſuch another place of reſt in my old age? Be ſo kind to write to the Baron in my behalf. If he is diſſatisfied with me, let him turn me off, and give me no employment; but if I have ſerved him faithfully for theſe forty years paſt, let him allow me to end my days in his ſervice and your's—he cannot reward me better." It is needleſs to enquire

quire whether Eloiſa wrote to the Baron or not. I perceive that ſhe would be as unwilling to part with this good man, as he would be to leave her. Am I wrong, my lord, when I compare a maſter and miſtreſs, thus beloved, to good parents, and their ſervants to obedient children? You find that they conſider themſelves in this light.

There is not a ſingle inſtance in this family of a ſervant's giving warning. It is even very ſeldom that they are threatened with a diſmiſſion. A menace of this kind alarms them in proportion as their ſervice is pleaſant and agreeable. The beſt ſubjects are always the ſooneſt alarmed, and there is never any occaſion to come to extremities but with ſuch as are not worth regretting. They have likewiſe a rule in this reſpect. When Mr. Wolmar ſays I diſcharge you, they may then implore Mrs. Wolmar to intercede for them, and through her interceſſion may be reſtored; but if ſhe gives them warning, it is irrevocable, and they have no favour to expect. This agreement between them is very well calculated both to moderate the extreme confidence which her gentleneſs might beget in them, and the violent apprehenſions they might conceive from his inflexibility. Such a warning, nevertheleſs, is exceſſively dreaded from a juſt and diſpaſſionate maſter; for beſides that they are not certain of obtaining favour, and that the ſame perſon is never pardoned twice, they

forfeit

forfeit the right which they acquire from their long ſervice, by having had warning given, and when they are reſtored, they begin a new ſervice as it were. This prevents the old ſervants from growing inſolent, and makes them more circumſpect, in proportion as they have more to loſe.

The three maid-ſervants are, the chamber-maid, the governeſs, and the cook. The latter is a country-girl, very proper and well qualified for the place, whom Mrs. Wolmar has inſtructed in cookery: for in this country, which is as yet in ſome meaſure in a ſtate of ſimplicity, young ladies learn to do that buſineſs themſelves, that when they keep houſe, they may be able to direct their ſervants; and conſequently are leſs liable to be impoſed upon by them. B—— is no longer the chamber-maid; they have ſent her back to Etange, where ſhe was born; they have again entruſted her with the care of the caſtle, and the ſuperintendance of the receipts, which makes her in ſome degree comptroller of the houſehold. Mr. Wolmar entreated his wife to make this regulation; but it was a long time before ſhe could reſolve to part with an old ſervant of her mother's, though ſhe had more than one reaſon to be diſpleaſed with her. But after their laſt conference, ſhe gave her conſent, and B—— is gone. The girl is handy and honeſt, but babbling and indiſcreet. I ſuſpect that ſhe has, more than once, betrayed the ſecrets of her miſtreſs, that Mr. Wolmar is

is ſenſible of it, and to prevent her being guilty of the ſame indiſcretion with reſpect to a ſtranger, he has prudently taken this method to avail himſelf of her good qualities, without running any hazard from her failings. She who is taken in her room, is that Fanny, of whom you have often heard me ſpeak with ſo much pleaſure. Notwithſtanding Eloiſa's prediction, her favours, her father's kindneſs, and your's, this deſerving and diſcreet woman has not been happy in her connexion. Claude Annet, who endured adverſity ſo bravely, could not ſupport a more proſperous ſtate. When he found himſelf at eaſe, he neglected his buſineſs, and his affairs being quite embarraſſed, he fled the country, leaving his wife with an infant, whom ſhe has ſince loſt. Eloiſa having taken her home, inſtructed her in the buſineſs of a chamber-maid, and I was never more agreeably ſurpriſed than to find her ſettled in her employment the firſt day of my arrival. Mr. Wolmar pays great regard to her, and they have both entruſted her with the charge of ſuperintending their children, and of having an eye likewiſe over their governeſs, who is a ſimple credulous country laſs, but attentive, patient, and tractable; ſo that, in ſhort, they have omitted no precaution to prevent the vices of the town from creeping into a family, where the maſter and miſtreſs are ſtrangers to them, and will not ſuffer them under their roof.

Though

Though there is but one table among all the ſervants, yet there is but little communication between the men and women, and this they conſider as a point of great importance. Mr. Wolmar is not of the ſame opinion with thoſe maſters, who are indifferent to every thing which does not immediately concern their intereſts, and who only deſire to be well ſerved, without troubling themſelves about what their ſervants do beſide. He thinks, on the contrary, that they who regard nothing but their own ſervice cannot be well ſerved. Too cloſe a connexion between the two ſexes frequently occaſions miſchief. The diſorders of moſt families ariſe from the rendezvous which are held in the chamber-maid's apartment. If there is one whom the ſteward happens to be fond of, he does not fail to ſeduce her at the expenſe of his maſter. A good underſtanding among the men, or among the women, is not alone ſufficiently firm to produce any material conſequences. But it is always between the men and the women that thoſe ſecret monopolies are eſtabliſhed, which in the end ruin the moſt wealthy families. They pay a particular attention, therefore, to the diſcretion and modeſty of the women, not only from principles of honeſty and morality, but from well-judged motives of intereſt. For, whatever ſome may pretend, no one who does not love his duty can diſcharge it as he ought; and none ever loved their duty who were devoid of honour.

They do not, to prevent any dangerous intimacy between the two ſexes, reſtrain them by poſitive rules which they might be tempted to violate in ſecret, but without any ſeeming intention, they eſtabliſh good cuſtoms, which are more powerful than authority itſelf. They do not forbid any intercourſe between them, but it is contrived in ſuch a manner that they have no occaſion or inclination to ſee each other. This is effectuated by making their buſineſs, their habits, their taſtes, and their pleaſures, entirely different. To maintain the admirable order which they have eſtabliſhed, they are ſenſible that in a well-regulated family there ſhould be as little correſpondence as poſſible between the two ſexes. They who would accuſe their maſter of caprice, was he to enforce ſuch a rule by way of injunction, ſubmit, without regret, to a manner of life which is not poſitively preſcribed to them, but which they themſelves conceive to be the beſt and moſt natural. Eloiſa inſiſts that it muſt be ſo in fact; ſhe maintains that neither love nor conjugal union is the reſult of a continual commerce between the ſexes. In her opinion, huſband and wife were deſigned to live together, but not to live in the ſame manner. They ought to act in concert, but not to do the ſame things. The kind of life, ſays ſhe, which would delight the one, would be inſupportable to the other; the inclinations which nature has given them are as different as the occupations ſhe has aſſigned them: they differ

in their amuſements as much as in their duties. In a word, each contributes to the common good by different ways, and the proper diſtribution of their ſeveral cares and employments is the ſtrongeſt tie that cements their union.

For my own part, I confeſs that my obſervations are much in favour of this maxim. In fact, is it not the general practice, except among the French, and thoſe who imitate them, for the men and women to live ſeparately? If they ſee each other, it is rather by ſhort interviews, and as it were by ſtealth, as the Spartans viſited their wives, than by an indiſcreet and conſtant intercourſe, ſufficient to confound and deſtroy the wiſeſt bounds of diſtinction which nature has ſet between them. We do not, even among the ſavages, ſee men and women intermingle indiſcriminately. In the evening, the family meet together; every one paſſes the night with his wife; when the day begins, they ſeparate again, and the two ſexes enjoy nothing in common, but their meals at moſt. This is the order which, from its univerſality, appears to be moſt natural, and even in thoſe countries where it is perverted, we may perceive ſome veſtiges of it remaining. In France, where the men have ſubmitted to live after the faſhion of the women, and to be continually ſhut up in a room with them, you may perceive from their involuntary motions that they are under confinement. While the ladies ſit quietly, or loll upon their couch, you may perceive the men get up, go, come, and ſit down

down again, perpetually reſtleſs, as if a kind of mechanical inſtinct continually counteracted the reſtraint they ſuffered, and prompted them, in their own deſpite, to that active and laborious life for which nature intended them. They are the only people in the world where the men *ſtand* at the theatre, as if they went into the pit to relieve themſelves of the fatigue of having been ſitting all day in a dining-room. In ſhort, they are ſo ſenſible of the irkſomeneſs of this effeminate and ſedentary indolence, that in order to chequer it with ſome degree of activity at leaſt, they yield their places at home to ſtrangers, and go to other men's wives, in order to alleviate their diſguſt!

The example of Mrs. Wolmar's family contributes greatly to ſupport the maxim ſhe eſtabliſhes. Every one, as it were, being confined to their proper ſex, the women there live in a great meaſure apart from the men. In order to prevent any ſuſpicious connexions between them, her great ſecret is to keep both one and the other conſtantly employed; for their occupations are ſo different, that nothing but idleneſs can bring them together. In the morning each apply to their proper buſineſs, and no one is at leiſure to interrupt the other. After dinner the men are employed in the garden, the yard, or in ſome other rural occupation: the women are buſy in the nurſery till the hour comes at which they take a walk with the children, and ſometimes indeed with the miſtreſs, which is very agreeable

to

to them, as it is the only time in which they take the air. The men, being ſufficiently tired with their day's work, have ſeldom any inclination to walk, and therefore reſt themſelves within doors.

Every Sunday, after evening ſervice, the women meet again in the nurſery, with ſome friend or relation, whom they invite in their turns by Mrs. Wolmar's conſent. There they have a little collation prepared for them by Eloiſa's direction; and ſhe permits them to chat, ſing, run, or play at ſome little game of ſkill, fit to pleaſe children, and ſuch as they may bear a part in themſelves. The entertainment is compoſed of ſyllabubs, cream, and different kinds of cakes, with ſuch other little viands as ſuit the taſte of women and children. Wine is almoſt excluded, and the men, who are rarely admitted of this little female party, never are preſent at this collation, which Eloiſa ſeldom miſſes. I am the only man who has obtained this privilege. Laſt Sunday, with great importunity, I got leave to attend her there. She took great pains to make me conſider it as a very ſingular favour. She told me aloud that ſhe granted it for that once only, and that ſhe had even refuſed Mr. Wolmar himſelf. You may imagine whether this difficulty of admiſſion does not flatter female vanity a little, and whether a footman would be a welcome viſitor, where his maſter was excluded.

I made

I made a moſt delicious repaſt with them. Where will you find ſuch cream-cakes as we have here? Imagine what they muſt be, made in a dairy where Eloiſa preſides, and eaten in her company. Fanny preſented me with ſome cream, ſome ſeed cake, and other little comfits. All was gone in an inſtant. Eloiſa ſmiled at my appetite. "I find (ſaid ſhe, giving me another plate of cream) that your appetite does you credit every where, and that you make as good a figure among a club of females, as you do among the Valaiſans."—"But I do not (anſwered I) make the repaſt with more impunity; the one may be attended with intoxication as well as the other; and reaſon may be as much diſtracted in a nurſery, as in a wine-cellar." She caſt her eyes down without making any reply, bluſhed, and began to play with her children. This was enough to ſting me with remorſe. This, my lord, was my firſt indiſcretion, and I hope it will be the laſt.

There was a certain air of primitive ſimplicity in this aſſembly, which affected me very ſenſibly. I perceived the ſame chearfulneſs in every countenance, and perhaps more openneſs than if there had been men in company. The familiarity which was obſervable between the miſtreſs and her ſervants, being founded on ſincere attachment and confidence, only ſerved to eſtabliſh reſpect and authority; and the ſervices rendered and received appeared like ſo many teſtimonies of reciprocal friendſhip. There was

nothing

nothing, even to the very choice of the collation, but what contributed to make this aſſembly engaging. Milk and ſugar are naturally adapted to the taſte of the fair-ſex, and may be deemed the ſymbols of innocence and ſweetneſs, which are their moſt becoming ornaments. Men, on the contrary, are fond of high flavours, and ſtrong liquors; a kind of nouriſhment more ſuitable to the active and laborious life for which nature has deſigned them; and when theſe different taſtes come to be blended, it is an infallible ſign that the diſtinction between the two ſexes is inordinately confounded. In fact, I have obſerved that in France, where the women conſtantly intermix with the men, they have entirely loſt their reliſh for milk meats, and the men have in ſome meaſure loſt their taſte for wine; and in England, where the two ſexes are better diſtinguiſhed, the proper taſte of each is better preſerved. In general, I am of opinion, that you may very often form ſome judgement of people's diſpoſition, from their choice of food. The Italians, who live a great deal on vegetables, are ſoft and effeminate. You Engliſhmen, who are great eaters of meat, have ſomething harſh in your rigid virtue, and which ſavours of barbariſm. The Swiſs, who is naturally of a calm, gentle, and cold conſtitution, but hot and violent when in a paſſion, is fond both of one and the other, and drinks milk and wine indiſcriminately. The Frenchman, who is pliant and changeable, lives upon all kinds of food, and conforms himſelf

himſelf to every taſte. Eloiſa herſelf, may ſerve as an inſtance: for though ſhe makes her meals with a keen appetite, yet, ſhe does not love meat, ragouts, or ſalt, and never yet taſted wine by itſelf. Some excellent roots, eggs, cream, and fruit, compoſe her ordinary diet, and was it not for fiſh, of which ſhe is likewiſe very fond, ſhe would be a perfect Pythagorean.

To keep the women in order would ſignify nothing, if the men were not likewiſe under proper regulations; and this branch of domeſtick œconomy, which is not of leſs importance, is ſtill more difficult; for the attack is generally more lively than the defenſe: the guardian of human nature intended it ſo. In the commonwealth, citizens are kept in order by principles of morality and virtue: but how are we to keep ſervants and mercenaries under proper regulations, otherwiſe than by force and reſtraint? The art of a maſter conſiſts in diſguiſing this reſtraint under the veil of pleaſure and intereſt, that what they are obliged to do may ſeem the reſult of their own inclination. Sunday being a day of idleneſs, and ſervants having a right of going where they pleaſe, when buſineſs does not require their duty at home, that one day often deſtroys all the good examples and leſſons of the other ſix. The habit of frequenting publick houſes, the converſe and maxims of their comrades, the company of looſe women, ſoon render them unſerviceable to their maſters, and unprofitable

profitable to themſelves; and by teaching them a thouſand vices, make them unfit for ſervitude, and unworthy of liberty.

To remedy this inconvenience, they endeavour to keep them at home by the ſame motives which induce them to go abroad. Why do they go abroad? To drink and play at a publick houſe. They drink and play at home. All the difference is, that the wine coſts them nothing that they do not get drunk, and that there are ſome winners at play without any loſers. The following is the method taken for this purpoſe:

Behind the houſe is a ſhady walk, where they have fixed the liſts. There, in the ſummer time, the livery ſervants and the men in the yard meet every Sunday after ſermon time, to play in little detached parties, not for money, for it is not allowed, nor for wine, which is given them; but for a prize furniſhed by their maſter's generoſity: which is generally ſome piece of goods or apparel fit for their uſe. The number of games in proportion to the value of the prize, ſo that when the prize is ſomewhat conſiderable, as a pair of ſilver buckles, a neckcloth, a pair of ſilk ſtockings, a fine hat, or any thing of that kind, they have generally ſeveral bouts to decide it. They are not confined to one particular game, but they change them, that one man, who happens to excel in a particular game, may not carry off all the prizes, and that they may grow ſtronger and more dexterous by a variety of exerciſes. At one time, the conteſt is who ſhall

firſt reach a mark at the other end of the walk; at another time it is who ſhall throw the ſame ſtone fartheſt; then again it is who ſhall carry the ſame weight longeſt. Sometimes they contend for a prize, by ſhooting at a mark. Moſt of theſe games are attended with ſome little preparations, which ſerve to prolong them; and render them entertaining. Their maſter and miſtreſs often honour them with their preſence; they ſometimes take their children with them; nay, even ſtrangers reſort thither, excited by curioſity, and they deſire nothing better than to bear a ſhare in the ſport; but none are ever admitted without Mr. Wolmar's approbation, and the conſent of the players, who would not find their account in granting it readily. This cuſtom has imperceptibly become a kind of ſhow, in which the actors, being animated by the preſence of the ſpectators, prefer the glory of applauſe to the lucre of the prize. As theſe exerciſes make them more active and vigorous, they ſet a greater value on themſelves, and being accuſtomed to eſtimate their importance from their own intrinſick worth, rather than from their poſſeſſions, they prize honour, notwithſtanding they are footmen, beyond money.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the advantages which they derive from a practice ſo trifling in appearance, and which is always deſpiſed by little minds; but it is the prerogative of true genius to produce great effects by inconſiderable means. Mr. Wolmar has aſſured

me that theſe little inſtitutions, which his wife firſt ſuggeſted, ſcarce ſtood him in fifty crowns a-year. "But (ſaid he) how often do you think I am repaid this ſum in my houſekeeping and my affairs in general, by the vigilance and attention with which I am ſerved by theſe faithful ſervants, who derive all their pleaſures from their maſter; by the intereſt they take in a family which they conſider as their own; by the advantage I reap in their labours, from the vigour they acquire at their exerciſes; by the benefit of keeping them always in health, in preſerving them from thoſe exceſſes which are common to men in their ſtation, and from thoſe diſorders which frequently attend ſuch exceſſes; by ſecuring them from any propenſity to knavery, which is an infallible conſequence of irregularity, and by confirming them in the practice of honeſty; in ſhort, by the pleaſure of having ſuch agreeable recreations within ourſelves at ſuch a trifling expenſe? If there are any among them, either man or woman, who do not care to conform to our regulations, but prefer the liberty of going where they pleaſe on various pretences, we never refuſe to give them leave: but we conſider this licentious turn as a very ſuſpicious ſymptom, and we are always ready to miſtruſt ſuch diſpoſitions. Thus theſe little amuſements, which furniſh us with good ſervants, ſerve alſo as a direction to us in the choice of them."—I muſt confeſs, my lord, that except in this family, I never ſaw the ſame men

made good domeſticks for perſonal ſervice, good huſbandmen for tilling the ground, good ſoldiers for the defenſe of their country, and honeſt fellows in any ſtation into which fortune may chance to throw them.

In the winter, their pleaſures vary, as well as their labours. On a Sunday, all the ſervants in the family, and even the neighbours, men and women indiſcriminately, meet after ſervice-time in a hall where there is a good fire, ſome wine, fruits, cakes, and a fiddle, to which they dance. Mrs. Wolmar never fails to be preſent for ſome time at leaſt, in order to preſerve decorum and modeſty by her preſence, and it is not uncommon for her to dance herſelf, though among her own people. When I was firſt made acquainted with this cuſtom, it appeared to me not quite conformable to the ſtrictneſs of Proteſtant morals. I told Eloiſa ſo; and ſhe anſwered me to the following effect:

"Pure morality is charged with ſo many ſevere duties, that if it is overburthened with forms which are in themſelves indifferent, they will always be of prejudice to what is really eſſential. This is ſaid to be the caſe with the monks in general, who, being ſlaves to rules totally immaterial, are utter ſtrangers to the meaning of honour and virtue. This defect is leſs obſervable among us, though we are not wholly exempt from it. Our churchmen, who are as much ſuperiour to other prieſts in knowledge, as our religion is ſuperiour to all others in pu-

rity, do nevertheleſs maintain ſome maxims, which ſeem to be rather founded on prejudice than reaſon. Of this kind, is that which condemns dancing and aſſemblies, as if there were more harm in dancing than ſinging, as if each of theſe amuſements were not equally a propenſity of nature, and as if it were a crime to divert ourſelves publickly with an innocent and harmleſs recreation. For my own part, I think, on the contrary, that every time there is a concourſe of the two ſexes, every publick diverſion becomes innocent, by being publick; whereas the moſt laudable employment becomes ſuſpicious in a *téte-à-téte* party*. Man and woman were formed for each other, their union by marriage is the end of nature. All falſe religion is at war with nature; our's, which conforms to and rectifies natural propenſity, proclaims a divine inſtitution which is moſt ſuitable to mankind. Religion ought not to increaſe the embarraſſment which civil regulations throw in the way of matrimony, by difficulties which the Goſpel does not create, and which are contrary to the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity. Let any one tell me where young people can have an opportunity of conceiving a mutual liking, and of ſeeing each other with more decorum and circumſpection than in an aſſembly, where the eyes of

* In my letter to M. D'Alembert, concerning the theatres, I have tranſcribed the following paſſage, and ſome *others; but* as I was then preparing this edition, I thought *it better to wait* this publication till I took notice of the *objection.*

of the ſpectators being conſtantly upon them, oblige them to behave with peculiar caution? How can we offend God by an agreeable and wholeſome exerciſe, ſuitable to the vivacity of youth; an exerciſe which conſiſts in the art of preſenting ourſelves to each other with grace and elegance, and wherein the preſence of the ſpectator impoſes a decorum which no one dares to violate? Can we conceive a more effectual method to avoid impoſition with reſpect to perſon at leaſt, by diſplaying ourſelves with all our natural graces and defects before thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to know us thoroughly, ere they oblige themſelves to love us? Is not the obligation of reciprocal affection greater than that of ſelf-love, and is it not an attention worthy of a pious and virtuous pair, who propoſe to marry, thus to prepare their hearts for that mutual love which heaven prompts?

"What is the conſequence, in thoſe places where people are under a continual reſtraint, where the moſt innocent gaiety is puniſhed as criminal, where the young people of different ſexes dare not meet in publick, and where the indiſcreet ſeverity of the paſtor preaches nothing, in the name of God, but ſervile conſtraint, ſadneſs, and melancholy? They find means to elude an inſufferable tyranny, which nature and reaſon diſavow. When gay and ſprightly youth are debarred from lawful pleaſures, they ſubſtitute others more dangerous in their ſtead. Private parties artfully concerted

ſupply the place of publick aſſemblies. By being obliged to concealment, as if they were criminal, they at length become ſo in fact. Harmleſs joy loves to diſplay itſelf in the face of the world, but vice is a friend to darkneſs; and innocence and ſecreſy never ſubſiſt long together. My dear friend (ſaid ſhe, graſping my hand, as if ſhe meant to convey her repentance, and communicate the purity of her own heart to mine;) who can be more ſenſible of the importance of this truth than ourſelves? What ſorrow and troubles, what tears and remorſe we might have prevented for ſo many years paſt, if we could but have foreſeen how dangerous a private intercourſe was to that virtue which we always loved!

"Beſides (ſaid Mrs. Wolmar, in a ſofter tone) it is not in a numerous aſſembly, where we are ſeen and heard by all the world, but in private parties, where ſecreſy and freedom is indulged, that our morals are in danger. It is from this principle, that whenever my domeſticks meet, I am glad to ſee them all together. I even approve of their inviting ſuch young people in the neighbourhood whoſe company will not corrupt them; and I hear with pleaſure, that, when they mean to commend the morals of any of our young neighbours, they ſay—He is admitted at Mr. Wolmar's. We have a further view in this. Our men ſervants are all very young, and among the women, the governeſs is yet ſingle; it is not reaſonable that the retired life they lead with us ſhould debar them of an opportunity

of

of forming an honeſt connexion. We endeavour, therefore, in theſe little meetings, to give them this opportunity, under our inſpection, that we may aſſiſt them in their choice; and thus, by endeavouring to make happy families, we increaſe the felicity of our own.

"I ought now to juſtify myſelf for dancing with theſe good people, but I rather chooſe to paſs ſentence on myſelf in this reſpect, and frankly confeſs that my chief motive is the pleaſure I take in the exerciſe. You know that I always reſembled my couſin in her paſſion for dancing; but after the death of my mother, I bade adieu to the ball, and all publick aſſemblies; I kept my reſolution, even to the day of my marriage, and will keep it ſtill, without thinking it any violation to dance now and then in my own houſe with my gueſts and my domeſticks. It is an exerciſe very good for my health during the ſedentary life which we are obliged to live here in winter. I find it an innocent amuſement; for after a good dance my conſcience does not reproach me. It amuſes Mr. Wolmar likewiſe, and all my coquetry in this particular is only to pleaſe him. I am the occaſion of his coming into the ball-room; the good people are beſt ſatisfied when they are honoured with their maſter's preſence; and they expreſs a ſatisfaction when they ſee me amongſt them. In ſhort, I find that ſuch occaſional familiarity forms an agreeable connexion and attachment between us, which approaches

nearer the natural condition of mankind, by moderating the meanneſs of ſervitude, and the rigour of authority."

Such, my lord, are the ſentiments of Eloiſa with reſpect to dancing, and I have often wondered how ſo much affability could conſiſt with ſuch a degree of ſubordination, and how ſhe and her huſband could ſo often ſtoop to level themſelves with their ſervants, and yet the latter never be tempted to aſſume equality in their turn. I queſtion if any Aſiatick monarchs are attended in their palaces with more reſpect than Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar are ſerved in their own houſe. I never knew any commands leſs imperious than their's, or more readily executed; if they aſk for any thing, their ſervants fly; if they excuſe their failings, they themſelves are nevertheleſs ſenſible of their faults. I was never better convinced how much the force of what is ſaid depends on the mode of expreſſion.

This has led me into a reflexion on the affected gravity of maſters; which is, that it is rather to be imputed to their own failings, than to the effects of their familiarity, that they are deſpiſed in their families, and that the inſolence of ſervants is rather an indication of a vicious than of a weak maſter: for nothing gives them ſuch aſſurances, as the knowledge of his vices, and they conſider all diſcoveries of that kind as ſo many diſpenſations, which free them from their obedience to a man whom they can no longer reſpect.

Servants

Servants imitate their maſters, and by copying them aukwardly, they render thoſe defects more conſpicuous in themſelves, which the poliſh of education, in ſome meaſure, diſguiſed in the others. At Paris, I uſed to judge of the ladies of my acquaintance, by the air and manners of their waiting-women, and this rule never deceived me. Beſides that the lady's woman, when ſhe becomes the confidant of her miſtreſs's ſecrets, makes her buy her diſcretion at a dear rate, ſhe likewiſe frames her conduct according to her lady's ſentiments, and diſcloſes all her maxims, by an aukward imitation. In every inſtance, the maſter's example is more efficacious than his authority; it is not natural to ſuppoſe that their ſervants will be honeſter than themſelves. It is to no purpoſe to make a noiſe, to ſwear, to abuſe them, to turn them off, to get a new ſet; all this avails nothing towards making good ſervants. When they who do not trouble themſelves about being hated and deſpiſed by their domeſticks nevertheleſs imagine that they are well ſerved, the reaſon of their miſtake is, that they are contented with what they ſee, and ſatisfied with an appearance of diligence, without obſerving the thouſand ſecret prejudices they ſuffer continually, and of which they cannot diſcover the ſource. But where is the man ſo devoid of honour, as to be able to endure the contempt of every one round him? Where is the woman ſo abandoned, as not to be ſuſceptible of inſults? How many ladies, both at

Paris and in London, who think themſelves greatly reſpected, would burſt into tears if they heard what was ſaid of them in their antechambers? Happily for their peace, they comfort themſelves by taking theſe Argusſes for weak creatures, and by flattering themſelves that they are blind to thoſe practices which they do not even deign to hide from them. They likewiſe in their turn diſcover, by their ſullen obedience, the contempt they have for their miſtreſſes. Maſters and ſervants become mutually ſenſible that it is not worth their while to conciliate each other's eſteem.

The behaviour of ſervants ſeems to me to be the moſt certain and nice proof of the maſter's virtue; and I remember, my lord, to have formed a good opinion of your's at Valais, without knowing you, purely becauſe, though you ſpoke ſomewhat harſhly to your attendants, they were not the leſs attached to you, and that they expreſſed as much reſpect for you in your abſence, as if you had been within hearing. It has been ſaid that no man is a hero in the eyes of his valet-de-chambre; perhaps not; but every worthy man will enjoy his ſervant's eſteem, which ſufficiently proves that heroiſm is only a vain phantom, and that nothing is ſolid but virtue. The power of its empire is particularly obſervable here in the loweſt commendations of the ſervants. Commendations the leſs to be ſuſpected, as they do not conſiſt of vain eulogiums, but of an artleſs expreſſion of their feelings. As they

they cannot ſuppoſe from any thing which they ſee, that other maſters are not like their's, they therefore do not commend them on account of thoſe virtues which they conceive to be common to maſters in general, but, in the ſimplicity of their hearts, they thank God for having ſent the rich to make thoſe under them happy, and to be a comfort to the poor.

Servitude is a ſtate ſo unnatural to mankind, that it cannot ſubſiſt without ſome degree of diſcontent. Nevertheleſs, they reſpect their maſter, and ſay nothing. If any murmurings eſcape them againſt their miſtreſs, they are more to her honour than encomiums would be. No one complains that ſhe is wanting in kindneſs to them, but that ſhe pays ſo much regard to others; no one can endure that his zeal ſhould be put in competition with that of his comrades, and as every one imagines himſelf foremoſt in attachment, he would be firſt in favour. This is their only complaint, and their greateſt injuſtice.

There is not only a proper ſubordination among thoſe of inferior ſtation, but a perfect harmony among thoſe of equal rank; and this is not the leaſt difficult part of domeſtick œconomy. Amidſt the claſhings of jealouſy and ſelf-intereſt, which make continual diviſions in families not more numerous than this, we ſeldom find ſervants united but at the expenſe of their maſters. If they agree, it is to rob in concert; if they are honeſt, every one ſhows his importance at the expenſe of the reſt: they muſt

either be enemies or accomplices, and it is very difficult to find a way of guarding at the ſame time both againſt their knavery and their diſſentions. The maſters of families in general know no other method but that of chooſing the alternative between theſe two inconveniences. Some, preferring intereſt to honour, foment a quarrelſome diſpoſition among their ſervants by means of private reports, and think it a maſterpiece of prudence to make them ſuperintendants and ſpies over each other. Others, of a more indolent nature, rather chooſe that their ſervants ſhould rob them, and live peaceably among themſelves; they pique themſelves upon diſcountenancing any information which a faithful ſervant may give them out of pure zeal. Both are equally to blame. The firſt, by exciting continual diſturbances in their families, which are incompatible with good order and regularity, get together a heap of knaves and informers, who are buſy in betraying their fellow ſervants, that they may hereafter perhaps betray their maſters. The ſecond, by refuſing any information with regard to what paſſes in their families, countenance combinations againſt themſelves, encourage the wicked, diſhearten the good, and only maintain a pack of arrogant and idle raſcals at a great expenſe, who, agreeing together at their maſter's coſt, look upon their ſervice as a matter of favour, and their thefts as perquiſites*.

* I have narrowly examined into the management of great families, and have found it impoſſible for a maſter

It is a capital errour in domeſtick as well as in civil œconomy, to oppoſe one vice to another, or to attempt an equilibrium between them, as if that which undermines the foundations of all order could ever tend to eſtabliſh regularity. This miſtaken policy only ſerves to unite every inconvenience. When particular vices are tolerated in a family, they do not reign alone. Let one take root, a thouſand will ſoon ſpring up. They preſently ruin the ſervants who harbour them, undo the maſter who tolerates them, and corrupt or injure the children who remark them with attention. What father can be ſo unworthy as to put any advantage whatever in competition with this laſt inconvenience? What honeſt man would chooſe to be maſter of a family, if it was impoſſible for him to maintain peace and fidelity in his houſe at the ſame time, and if he muſt be obliged to purchaſe the attachment of his ſervants at the expenſe of their mutual good underſtanding?

Who does not ſee, that in this family, they have not even an idea of any ſuch difficulty? ſo much does the union among the ſeveral members proceed from their attachment to the head. It is here we may perceive a ſtriking inſtance, how impoſſible it is to have a ſincere affection for

maſter who has twenty ſervants, to know whether he has one honeſt man among them, and not to miſtake the greateſt raſcal perhaps to be that one. This alone would give me an averſion to riches. The rich loſe one of the ſweeteſt pleaſures of life, the pleaſure of confidence and eſteem. They purchaſe all their gold at a dear rate!

for a maſter, without loving every thing that belongs to him; a truth which is the real foundation of chriſtian charity. Is it not very natural that the children of the ſame father ſhould live together like brethren? This is what they tell us every day at church, without making us feel the ſentiment; and this is what the domeſticks in this family feel, without being told it.

This diſpoſition to good fellowſhip is owing to a choice of proper ſubjects. Mr. Wolmar, when he hires his ſervants, does not examine whether they ſuit his wife and himſelf, but whether they ſuit each other, and if they were to diſcover a ſettled antipathy between two of the beſt ſervants, it would be ſufficient for them to diſcharge one: for, ſays Eloiſa, in ſo ſmall a family, a family where they never go abroad, but are conſtantly before each other, they ought to agree perfectly among themſelves. They ought to conſider it as their father's houſe, where all are of the ſame family. One who happens to be diſagreeable to the reſt is enough to make them hate the place; and that diſagreeable object being conſtantly before their eyes, they would neither be eaſy themſelves, nor ſuffer us to be quiet.

After having made the beſt aſſortment in their power, they unite them as it were by the ſervices which they oblige each to render the other, and they contrive that it ſhall be the real intereſt of every one to be beloved by his fellow ſervants.

vants. No one is ſo well received who ſollicits a favour for himſelf, as when he aſks it for another; ſo that whoever has any thing to requeſt, endeavours to engage another to intercede for him; and this they do with greater readineſs, ſince, whether their maſter grants or refuſes the favour requeſted, he never fails to acknowledge the merit of the perſon interceding. On the contrary, both he and Mrs. Wolmar always reject the ſollicitations of thoſe who only regard themſelves. Why, ſay they, ſhould I grant what is deſired in your favour, who have never made me any requeſt in favour of another? Is it reaſonable that you ſhould be more favoured than your companions, becauſe they are more obliging than you? They do more: they engage them to ſerve each other in private without any oſtentation, and without aſſuming any merit. This is the more eaſily accompliſhed, as they know that their maſter, who is witneſs of their diſcretion, will eſteem them the more; thus ſelf-intereſt is a gainer, and ſelf-love no loſer. They are ſo convinced of this general diſpoſition to oblige, and they have ſuch confidence in each other, that when they have any favour to aſk, they frequently mention it at table, by way of converſation; very often, without further trouble, they find that the thing has been requeſted and granted, and as they do not know whom to thank, their obligation is to all.

It is by this, and ſuch like methods, that they beget an attachment among them, reſulting from,

and ſubordinate to, the zeal they have for their maſter. Thus, far from leaguing together to his prejudice, they are only united for his ſervice. However it may be their intereſt to love each other, they have ſtill ſtronger motives for pleaſing him; their zeal for his ſervice gets the better of their mutual good-will, and each conſidering himſelf as injured by loſſes which may make their maſter leſs able to recompenſe a faithful ſervant, they are all equally incapable of ſuffering any individual to do him wrong unnoticed. This principle of policy, which is eſtabliſhed in this family, ſeems to have ſomewhat ſublime in it; and I cannot ſufficiently admire how Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar have been able to transform the vile function of an informer into an office of zeal, integrity, and courage, as noble, or at leaſt as praiſe-worthy, as it was among the Romans.

They began by ſubverting, or rather by preventing, in a plain and perſpicuous manner, and by affecting inſtances, that ſervile and criminal practice, that mutual toleration at the maſter's coſt, which a worthleſs ſervant never fails to inculcate to a good one, under the maſk of a charitable maxim. They made them underſtand, that the precept which enjoins us to hide our neighbour's faults relates to thoſe only which do injury to no one; that if they are witneſſes to any injuſtice which injures a third perſon, and do not diſcover it, they are guilty of it themſelves; and that as nothing can oblige us

to

to conceal ſuch faults in others, but a conſciouſneſs of our own defects, therefore no one would chooſe to countenance knaves, if he was not a knave himſelf. Upon theſe principles, which are juſt in general as between man and man, but more ſtrictly ſo with reſpect to the cloſe connexion between maſter and ſervant, they hold it here as an inconteſtable truth, that whoever ſees their maſter wronged, without making a diſcovery, is more guilty than he who did the wrong; for he ſuffers himſelf to be miſled by the proſpect of advantage, but the other in cool blood, and without any view of intereſt, can be induced to ſecreſy by no other motive than a thorough diſregard of juſtice, an indifference towards the welfare of the family he ſerves, and a hidden deſire of copying the example he conceals. Therefore, even where the fault is conſiderable, the guilty party may nevertheleſs ſometimes hope for pardon, but the witneſs who conceals the fact is infallibly diſmiſſed, as a man of a bad diſpoſition.

In return, they receive no accuſation which may be ſuſpected to proceed from injuſtice and calumny; that is to ſay, they admit of none in the abſence of the accuſed. If any one comes to make a report againſt his fellow ſervant, or to prefer a perſonal complaint againſt him, they aſk him whether he is ſufficiently informed, that is to ſay, whether he has entered into any previous enquiry with the perſon whom he is going to accuſe? If he anſwers in the negative, they

aſk him how he can judge of an action, when he is not acquainted with the motives to it? The fact, ſay they, may depend on ſome circumſtance to which you are a ſtranger; there may be ſome particulars which may ſerve to juſtify or excuſe it, and which you know nothing of. How can you preſume to condemn any one's conduct, before you know by what motives it is directed? One word of explanation would probably have rendered it juſtifiable in your eyes. Why then do you run the riſk of condemning an action wrongfully, and of expoſing me to participate of your injuſtice? If he aſſures them that he has entered into a previous explanation with the accuſed; why then, ſay they, do you come without him, as if you was afraid that he would falſify what you are going to relate? By what right do you neglect taking the ſame precaution with reſpect to me, which you think proper to uſe with regard to yourſelf? Is it reaſonable to deſire me to judge of a fact from your report, of which you refuſe to judge yourſelf by the teſtimony of your own eyes; and would not you be anſwerable for the partial judgement I might form, if I was to remain ſatisfied with your bare depoſition? In the end, they direct them to ſummon the party accuſed; if they conſent, the matter is ſoon decided; if they refuſe, they diſmiſs them with a ſevere reprimand, but they keep the ſecret, and watch them both ſo narrowly, that they are not long at a loſs to know which is in fault.

This

This rule is ſo well known, and ſo well eſtabliſhed, that you never hear a ſervant in this family ſpeak ill of his abſent comrade, for they are all ſenſible that it is the way to paſs for a liar and a coward. When any one of them accuſes another, it is openly, frankly, and not only to his face, but in the preſence of all his fellow-ſervants, that they who are witneſſes to their accuſation may be vouchers of their integrity. In caſe of any perſonal diſputes among them, the difference is generally made up by mediators, without troubling Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar; but when the intereſt of the maſter is at ſtake, the matter cannot remain a ſecret; the guilty party muſt either accuſe himſelf, or be accuſed. Theſe little pleadings happen very ſeldom, and never but at table, in the rounds which Eloiſa makes every day while her people are at dinner or ſupper, which Mr. Wolmar pleaſantly calls her general ſeſſions. After having patiently attended to the accuſation and the defenſe, if the affairs regard her intereſt, ſhe thanks the accuſer for his zeal. I am ſenſible, ſays ſhe, that you have a regard for your fellow ſervant, you have always ſpoken well of him, and I commend you, becauſe the love of your duty and of juſtice has prevailed over your private affections, it is thus that a faithful ſervant and an honeſt man ought to behave. If the party accuſed is not in fault, ſhe always ſubjoins ſome compliment to her juſtification of his innocence. But if he is really guilty, ſhe in ſome meaſure ſpares

his

his ſhame before the reſt. She ſuppoſes that he has ſomething to communicate in his defenſe, which he does not chooſe to declare in publick; ſhe appoints an hour to hear him in private, and it is then that ſhe or her huſband talk to him as they think proper. What is very remarkable is, that the moſt ſevere of the two is not moſt dreaded, and that they are leſs afraid of Mr. Wolmar's ſolemn reprimand, than of Eloiſa's affecting reproaches. The former, ſpeaking the language of truth and juſtice, humbles and confounds the guilty; the latter ſtrikes them with the moſt cruel remorſe, by convincing them with what regret ſhe is forced to withdraw her kindneſs from them. She ſometimes extorts tears of grief and ſhame from them, and it is not uncommon for her to be moved herſelf when ſhe ſees them repent, in hopes that ſhe may not be obliged to abide by her word.

They who judge of theſe concerns by what paſſes in their own families, or among their neighbours, would probably deem them frivolous or tireſome. But you, my lord, who have ſuch high notions of the duties and enjoyments of a maſter of a family, and who are ſenſible what an aſcendancy natural diſpoſition and virtue have over the human heart, you perceive the importance of theſe minutiæ, and know on what circumſtances their ſucceſs depends. Riches do not make a man rich, as is well obſerved in ſome romance. The wealth of a man is not in his coffers, but in the uſe he makes of what he draws out of them; for our poſſeſſions

poſſeſſions do not become our own, but by the uſes to which we allot them, and abuſes are always more inexhauſtible than riches; whence it happens that our enjoyments are not in proportion to our expenſes, but depend on the juſt regulation of them. An ideot may toſs ingots of gold into the ſea, and ſay he has enjoyed them: but what compariſon is there between ſuch an extravagant enjoyment and that which a wiſe man would have derived from the leaſt part of their value? Order and regularity, which multiply and perpetuate the uſe of riches, are alone capable of converting the enjoyment of them into felicity. But if real property ariſes from the relation which our poſſeſſions bear to us, if it is rather the uſe than the acquiſition of riches which confers it, what can be more proper ſubjects of attention for a maſter of a family than domeſtick œconomy, and the prudent regulation of his houſehold, in which the moſt perfect correſpondences more immediately concern him, and where the happineſs of every individual is an addition to the felicity of the head?

Are the moſt wealthy the moſt happy? No. How then does wealth contribute to felicity? But every well-regulated family is emblematick of the maſter's mind. Gilded ceilings, luxury, and magnificence, only ſerve to ſhow the vanity of thoſe who diſplay ſuch parade; whereas, whenever you ſee order without melancholy, peace without ſlavery, plenty without profuſion,

you may ſay with confidence, the maſter of this houſe is a happy being.

For my own part, I think the moſt certain ſign of true content is a domeſtick and retired life, and that they who are continually reſorting to others in queſt of happineſs do not enjoy it at home. A father of a family, who amuſes himſelf at home, is rewarded for his continual attention to domeſtick concerns by the conſtant enjoyment of the moſt agreeable ſenſations of nature. He is the only one who can be properly ſaid to be maſter of his own happineſs, becauſe, like heaven itſelf, he is happy in deſiring nothing more than he enjoys. Like the Supreme Being, he does not wiſh to enlarge his poſſeſſions, but to make them really his own, under proper directions, and by uſing them conformably to the juſt relations of things: if he does not enrich himſelf by new acquiſitions, he enriches himſelf by the true enjoyment of what he poſſeſſes. He once only enjoyed the income of his lands, he now enjoys the lands themſelves, by over-looking their culture, and ſurveying them from time to time. His ſervant was a ſtranger to him: he is now part of his enjoyment; his child; he makes him his own. Formerly he had only power over his ſervant's actions, now he has authority over his inclinations. He was his maſter only by paying him wages, now he rules by the ſacred dominion of benevolence and eſteem. Though fortune ſpoils him of his wealth, ſhe can never rob him of thoſe

thoſe affections which are attached to him; ſhe cannot deprive a father of his children; all the difference is, that he maintained them yeſterday, and that they will ſupport him to-morrow. It is thus that we may learn the true enjoyment of our riches, of our family, and of ourſelves; it is thus that the minutiæ of a family become agreeable to a worthy man who knows the value of them; it is thus, that far from conſidering theſe little duties as troubleſome, he makes them a part of his happineſs, and derives the glory and pleaſure of human nature from theſe noble and affecting offices.

If theſe precious advantages are deſpiſed or little known, and if the few who endeavour to acquire them ſeldom obtain them, the reaſon, in both caſes, is the ſame. There are many ſimple and ſublime duties, which few people can reliſh and fulfill. Such are thoſe of the maſter of a family, for which the air and buſtle of the world give him a diſguſt, and which he never diſcharges properly when he is only inflamed by motives of avarice and intereſt. Some think themſelves excellent maſters, and are only careful œconomiſts; their income may thrive, and their family nevertheleſs be in a bad condition. They ought to have more enlarged views to direct an adminiſtration of ſuch importance, ſo as to give it a happy iſſue. The firſt thing to be attended to in the due regulation of a family, is to admit none but honeſt people, who will not have any ſecret intention to diſturb that regularity.

regularity. But are honeſty and ſervitude ſo compatible, that we may hope to find ſervants who are honeſt men? No, my lord, if we would have them, we muſt not enquire for them, but we muſt make them; and none who are not men of integrity themſelves are capable of making others honeſt. It is to no purpoſe for a hypocrite to affect an air of virtue; he will never inſpire any one with an affection for it; and if he knew how to make virtue amiable, he would be in love with it himſelf. What do formal leſſons avail, when daily example contradicts them, unleſs to make us ſuſpect that the moraliſt means to ſport with our credulity? What an abſurdity are they guilty of who exhort us to do as they ſay, and not as they act themſelves! He who does not act up to what he ſays never ſpeaks to any effect; for the language of the heart is wanting, which alone is perſuaſive and affecting. I have ſometimes heard converſations of this kind held in a groſs manner before ſervants, in order to read them lectures, as they do to children ſometimes, in an indirect way. Far from having any reaſon to imagine that they were the dupes of ſuch artifice, I have always obſerved them ſmile in ſecret at their maſter's folly, who muſt have taken them for blockheads, by making an aukward diſplay of ſentiments before them, which they knew were none of his own.

All theſe idle ſubtleties are unknown in this family, and the grand art by which the maſter

and

and miſtreſs make their ſervants what they would deſire them to be, is to appear themſelves before them what they really are. Their behaviour is always frank and open, becauſe they are not in any fear leſt their actions ſhould bely their profeſſions. As they themſelves do not entertain principles of morality different from thoſe which they inculcate to others, they have no occaſion for any extraordinary circumſpection in their diſcourſe; a word blundered out unſeaſonably does not overthrow the principles they have laboured to eſtabliſh. They do not indiſcreetly tell all their affairs, but they openly proclaim all their maxims. Whether at table, or abroad, in private, or in publick, their ſentiments are ſtill the ſame; they ingenuouſly deliver their opinions on every ſubject, and without their having any individual in view every one is inſtructed by their converſation. As their ſervants never ſee them do any thing but what is juſt, reaſonable, and equitable, they do not conſider juſtice as a tax on the poor, as a yoke on the unhappy, and as one of the evils of their condition. The care they take never to let the labourers come in vain, and loſe their day's work in ſeeking after their wages, teaches their ſervants to ſet a juſt value on time. When they ſee their maſter ſo careful of other men's time, each concludes that his own time muſt be of conſequence, and therefore deems idleneſs the greateſt crime he can be guilty of. The confidence which their ſervants have in their integrity gives that force

to their regulations which makes them obſerved, and prevents abuſes. They are not afraid, when they come to receive their weekly gratuities, that their miſtreſs ſhould partially determine the youngeſt and moſt active to have been the moſt diligent. An old ſervant is not apprehenſive leſt they ſhould ſtart ſome quibble, to ſave the promiſed augmentation to their wages. They can never hope to take advantage of any diviſion between their maſter and miſtreſs, in order to make themſelves of conſequence, and to obtain from one what the other has refuſed. They who are unmarried are not afraid leſt they ſhould oppoſe their ſettlement, in order to detain them longer, and by that means make their ſervice a prejudice to them. If a ſtrange ſervant was to tell the domeſticks of this family, that maſter and ſervants are in a ſtate of war with each other; that when the latter do the former all the injury they can, they only make lawful repriſals; that maſters being uſurpers, liars, and knaves, there can conſequently be no harm in uſing them as they uſe their prince, the people, or individuals, and in returning thoſe injuries with dexterity, which they offer openly——one who ſhould talk in this manner would not be attended to; they would not give themſelves the trouble to controvert or obviate ſuch ſentiments; they who give riſe to them are the only perſons whoſe buſineſs it is to refute them.

You never perceive any ſullenneſs or diſcontent in the diſcharge of their duty, becauſe there

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is never any haughtineſs or capriciouſneſs in the orders they receive; nothing is required of them but what is reaſonable and expedient, and their maſter and miſtreſs have too much reſpect for the dignity of human nature, even in a ſtate of ſervitude, to put them upon any employment which may debaſe them. Moreover, nothing here is reckoned mean but vice, and whatever is reaſonable and neceſſary is deemed honourable and becoming.

They do not allow of any intrigues abroad, neither has any one any inclinations of that kind. They are ſenſible that their fortune is moſt firmly attached to their maſter's, and that they ſhall never want any thing while his family proſpers. Therefore, in ſerving him, they take care of their own patrimony, and increaſe it by making their ſervice agreeable: this, above all things, is their intereſt. But this word is ſomewhat miſapplied here, for I never knew any ſyſtem of policy by which ſelf-intereſt was ſo ſkilfully directed, and where at the ſame time it had leſs influence, than in this family. They all act from a principle of attachment, and one would think that venal ſouls were purified as ſoon as they entered into this dwelling of wiſdom and union. He would imagine that part of the maſter's intelligence, and of the miſtreſs's ſenſibility, was conveyed to each of their ſervants; they ſeem ſo judicious, benevolent, honeſt, and ſo much above their ſtation. Their greateſt ambition is to do well, to be valued and eſteemed;

and they conſider an obliging expreſſion from their maſter or miſtreſs in the light of a preſent.

Theſe, my lord, are the moſt material obſervations I have made on that part of the œconomy of this family which regards the ſervants and labourers. As to Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar's manner of living, and the education of their children, each of theſe articles very well deſerves a ſeparate letter. You know with what view I began theſe remarks; but in truth the whole forms ſuch an agreeable repreſentation, that we need only meditate upon it to advance it, and we require no other inducement than the pleaſure it affords us.

LETTER CXXX.

TO LORD B——

NO, my lord; I do not retract what I have ſaid; in this family, the uſeful and agreeable are united throughout; but occupations of uſe are not confined to thoſe purſuits which yield profit: they comprehend further every innocent and harmleſs amuſement which may ſerve to improve a reliſh for retirement, labour, and temperance, which may contribute to preſerve the mind in a vigorous ſtate, and to keep the heart free from the agitation of tumultuous paſſions. If inactive indolence begets nothing but melancholy and irkſomeneſs, the delights of an agreeable leiſure are the fruits of a laborious life. We only

only work to enjoy ourſelves; this alternative of labour and recreation is our natural ſtate. The repoſe which ſerves to refreſh us after paſt labours, and encourage us to renew them, is not leſs neceſſary for us than labour itſelf.

After having admired the good conſequences attending the vigilance and attention of the prudent Eloiſa in the conduct of her family, I was witneſs of the good effects of the recreation ſhe uſes in a retired place, where ſhe takes her favourite walk, and which ſhe calls her Elyſium.

I had often heard them talk of this Elyſium, of which they made a myſtery before me. Yeſterday, however, the exceſſive heat being almoſt equally intolerable both within doors and without, Mr. Wolmar propoſed to his wife to make holiday that afternoon, and inſtead of going into the nurſery towards evening, as uſual, to come and breathe the freſh air with us in the orchard; ſhe conſented, and thither we went.

This place, though juſt cloſe to the houſe, is hidden in ſuch a manner by a ſhady walk, that it is not viſible from any point. The thick foliage with which it is environed renders it impervious to the eye, and it is always carefully locked up. I was ſcarce got within-ſide, but the door, being covered with alder and haſle-trees, I could not find out which way I came in, when I turned back, and ſeeing no door, it ſeemed as if I had dropped from the clouds.

On my enterance into this diſguiſed orchard, I was ſeiſed with an agreeable ſenſation; the

freſhneſs of the thick foliage, the beautiful and lovely verdure, the flowers ſcattered on each ſide, the murmuring of the purling ſtream, and the warbling of a thouſand birds, ſtruck my imagination as powerfully as my ſenſes; but at the ſame time I thought myſelf in the moſt wild and ſolitary place in nature, and I appeared as if I had been the firſt mortal who had ever penetrated into this deſert ſpot. Being ſeiſed with aſtoniſhment, and tranſported at ſo unexpected a ſight, I remained motionleſs for ſome time, and cried out, in an involuntary fit of enthuſiaſm, "O Tinian! O Juan Fernandez*! Eloiſa, the world's end is at your threſhold!"—"Many people (ſaid ſhe, with a ſmile) think in the ſame manner; but twenty paces at moſt preſently brings them back to Clarens: let us ſee whether the charm will work longer upon you. This is the ſame orchard where you have walked formerly, and where you have played at romps with my couſin. You may remember that the graſs was almoſt burned up, the trees thinly planted, affording very little ſhade, and that there was no water. You find that now it is freſh, verdant, cultivated, embelliſhed with flowers, and well watered; what do you imagine it may have coſt me to put it into the condition you ſee? For you muſt know that I am the ſuperintendant, and that my huſband leaves the entire management of it to me."—"In truth (ſaid I) it has coſt you

* Deſert iſlands in the South-Sea, celebrated in Lord Anſon's voyage.

you nothing but inattention. It is indeed a delightful ſpot, but wild and ruſtick; and I can diſcover no marks of human induſtry. You have concealed the door; the water ſprings I know not whence; Nature alone has done all the reſt, and even you could not have mended her work." "It is true (ſaid ſhe) that Nature has done every thing, but under my direction, and you ſee nothing but what has been done under my orders. Gueſs once more."—"Firſt (I replied) I cannot conceive how labour and expenſe can be made to ſupply the effects of time. The trees. . ." "As to them (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) you may obſerve that there are none very large, and they were here before. Beſides, Eloiſa began this work a long while before her marriage, and preſently after her mother's death, when ſhe uſed to come here with her father in queſt of ſolitude."—"Well (ſaid I) ſince you will have theſe large and maſſy bowers, theſe ſloping tufts, theſe umbrageous thickets to be the growth of ſeven or eight years, and to be partly the work of art, I think you have been a good œconomiſt, if you have done all within this vaſt circumference for two thouſand crowns."—"You have only gueſſed two thouſand crowns too much (ſays ſhe) for it coſt me nothing."—"How! nothing!"—"No, nothing; unleſs you place a dozen days work in the year to my gardener's account, as many to two or three of my people, and ſome to Mr. Wolmar, who has ſometimes condeſcended to officiate in my ſervice as a gardener." I could not comprehend

this riddle; but Eloiſa, who had hitherto held me, ſaid to me (letting me looſe) "Go, and you will underſtand it. Farewell Tinian! farewell Juan Fernandez! farewell all enchantment! In a few minutes you will find your way back from the end of the world."

I began to wander over the orchard thus metamorphoſed with a kind of extaſy; and if I found no exotick plants, nor any of the products of the Indies, I found all thoſe which were natural to the ſoil, diſpoſed and blended in ſuch a manner, as to produce the moſt chearful and lively effect. The verdant turf, thick but ſhort and cloſe, was intermixed with wild thyme, balm, ſweet marjoram, and other fragrant herbs. You might perceive a thouſand wild flowers dazzle your eyes, among which you would be ſurpriſed to diſcover ſome garden-flowers, which ſeemed to grow natural with the reſt. I now and then met with ſhady tufts, as impervious to the rays of the ſun as if they had been in a thick foreſt. Theſe tufts were compoſed of trees of a very flexible nature, the branches of which they bend, till they hang on the ground, and take root, as I have ſeen ſome trees naturally do in America. In the more open ſpots, I ſaw here and there buſhes of roſes, raſpberries, and gooſeberries: little plantations of lilac, hazle-trees, alders, ſeringa, broom, and trefoil, diſperſed without any order or ſymmetry, and which embelliſhed the ground, at the ſame time that it gave it the appearance of being overgrown with

with weeds. I followed the track through irregular and ſerpentine walks, bordered by theſe flowery thickets, and covered with a thouſand garlands compoſed of vines, hops, roſe-weed, ſnake-weed, and other plants of that kind, with which honey-ſuckles and jeſſamine deigned to intertwine. Theſe garlands ſeemed as if they were ſcattered careleſsly from one tree to another, and formed a kind of drapery over our heads, which ſheltered us from the ſun; while under foot we had ſmooth, agreeable, and dry walking upon a fine moſs, without ſand, or graſs, or any rugged ſhoots. Then it was I firſt diſcovered, not without aſtoniſhment, that this verdant and buſhy umbrage, which had deceived me ſo much at a diſtance, was compoſed of theſe luxuriant and creeping plants, which running all along the trees, formed a thick foliage over-head, and afforded ſhade and freſhneſs under foot. I obſerved likewiſe, that by means of common induſtry, they had made ſeveral of theſe plants take root in the trunks of the trees, ſo that they ſpread more, being nearer the top. You will readily conceive that the fruit is not the better for theſe additions; but this is the only ſpot where they have ſacrificed the uſeful to the agreeable, and in the reſt of their grounds they have taken ſuch care of the tree, that without the orchard, the return of fruit is greater than it was formerly. If you do but conſider how delightful it is to meet with wild fruit in the midſt of a wood, and to refreſh one's ſelf with it, you

will eaſily conceive what a pleaſure it muſt be to meet with excellent and ripe fruit in this artificial deſert, though it grows but here and there, and has not the beſt appearance; which gives one the pleaſure of ſearching, and ſelecting the beſt.

All theſe little walks were bordered and croſſed by a clear and limpid rivulet, which one while winded through the graſs and flowers, in ſtreams ſcarce perceptible; at another, ruſhed in more copious floods upon a clear and ſpeckled gravel, which rendered the water more tranſparent. You might perceive the ſprings riſe and bubble out of the earth, and ſometimes you might obſerve deep canals, in which the calm and gentle fluid ſerved as a mirror to reflect the objects around. "Now (ſaid I to Eloiſa) I comprehend all the reſt; but theſe waters which I ſee on every ſide."—"They come from thence," ſhe replied, pointing to that ſide where the terrace lies. "It is the ſame ſtream which, at a vaſt expenſe, ſupplied the fountain in the flower-garden, for which nobody cares. Mr. Wolmar will not deſtroy it, out of reſpect to my father, who had it made; but with what pleaſure we come here every day to ſee this water run through the orchard, which we never look at in the garden! The fountain plays for the entertainment of ſtrangers; this little rivulet flows for our amuſement. It is true, that I have likewiſe brought hither the water from the publick fountain, which emptied itſelf into the lake, through

the highway, to the detriment of paſſengers, beſides its running to waſte, without profit to any one. It formed an elbow at the foot of the orchard, between two rows of willows; I have taken them within my encloſure, and I bring the ſame water hither through different channels."

I perceived then that all the contrivance conſiſted in managing theſe ſtreams, ſo as to make them flow in meanders, by ſeparating and uniting them at proper places, by making them run as little upon the ſlope as poſſible, in order to lengthen their courſe, and make the moſt of a few little murmuring caſcades. A lay of earth, covered with ſome gravel from the lake, and ſtrewed over with ſhells, forms a bed for theſe waters. The ſame ſtreams running at proper diſtances under ſome large tiles covered with earth and turf, on a level with the ground, form a kind of artificial ſprings, where they iſſue forth. Some ſmall ſtreams ſpout through pipes on ſome rugged places, and bubble as they fall. The ground thus refreſhed and watered continually yields freſh flowers, and keeps the graſs always verdant and beautiful.

The more I wandered over this delightful aſylum, the more I found the agreeable ſenſation improve which I experienced at my firſt enterance: nevertheleſs, my curioſity kept me in exerciſe; I was more eager to view the objects around me than to enquire into the cauſe of the impreſſions they made on me, and I

choſe to reſign myſelf to that delightful contemplation, without taking the trouble of reflexion; but Mrs. Wolmar drew me out of my reverie, by taking me under the arm. "All that you ſee (ſaid ſhe) is nothing but vegetable and inanimate nature, which, in ſpite of us, always leaves behind it a melancholy idea of ſolitude. Come and view nature animated and more affecting. There you will diſcover ſome new charm every minute in the day."—"You anticipate me (ſaid I;) I hear a confuſed chirping noiſe, and I ſee but few birds; I ſuppoſe you have an aviary."—"True (ſaid ſhe): let us go to it." I durſt not as yet declare what I thought of this aviary; but there was ſomething in the idea of it which diſguſted me, and did not ſeem to correſpond with the reſt.

We went down, through a thouſand turnings, to the bottom of the orchard, where I found all the water collected in a fine rivulet, flowing gently between two rows of old willows, which had been frequently lopped. Their tops being hollow, and half bare, formed a kind of veſſel, from whence, by the contrivance I juſt now mentioned, grew ſeveral tufts of honey-ſuckles, of which one part intertwined among the branches, and the other dropped careleſsly along the ſide of the rivulet. Near the extremity of the enclоſure was a little baſon, bordered with graſs, bulruſhes, and weeds, which ſerved as a watering-place to the aviary, and was the laſt uſe made of this water, ſo precious and ſo well huſbanded.

Somewhat

Somewhat beyond this baſon was a platform, which was terminated, in an angle of the encloſure, by a hillock planted with a number of little trees of all kinds; the ſmalleſt ſtood towards the ſummit, and their ſize increaſed in proportion as the ground grew lower, which made their tops appear to be horizontal, or at leaſt ſhowed that they were one day intended to be ſo. In the front ſtood a dozen of trees, which were young as yet, but of a nature to grow very large, ſuch as the beech, the elm, the aſh, and the acaca. The groves on this ſide ſerved as an aſylum to that vaſt number of birds which I had heard chirping at a diſtance, and it was under the ſhade of this foliage, as under a large umbrella, that you might ſee them hop about, run, friſk, provoke each other, and fight, as if they had not perceived us. They were ſo far from flying at our approach, that, according to the notion with which I was prepoſſeſſed, I imagined them to have been encloſed within a wire; but when we came to the border of the baſon, I ſaw ſeveral of them alight, and come towards us through a ſhort walk which parted the platform in two, and made a communication between the baſon and the aviary. Mr. Wolmar then going round the baſon, ſcattered two or three handfuls of mixed grain, which he had in his pocket, along the walk, and when he retired, the birds flocked together, and began to feed like ſo many chickens, with ſuch an air of familiarity, that I plainly perceived they had been trained up to it. "This

is charming (ſaid I:) your uſing the word aviary, ſurpriſed me at firſt, but I now ſee what it is; I perceive that you invite them as your gueſts, inſtead of confining them as your priſoners."—"What do you mean by our gueſts? (replied Eloiſa); it is we who are their's. They are maſters here, and we pay them for being admitted ſometimes."—"Very well (ſaid I) but how did theſe maſters get poſſeſſion of this ſpot? How did you collect together ſo many voluntary inhabitants? I never heard of any attempt of this kind, and I could not have believed that ſuch a deſign could have ſucceeded, if I had not evidence of it before my eyes."

"Time and patience (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) have worked this miracle. Theſe are expedients which the rich ſcarce ever think of in their pleaſures. Always in haſte for enjoyment, force and money are the only inſtruments they know how to employ; they have birds in cages, and friends at ſo much a month. If the ſervants ever came near this place, you would ſoon ſee the birds diſappear; and if you perceive vaſt numbers of them at preſent, the reaſon is, that this ſpot has always, in ſome degree, been a refuge for them. There is no bringing them together where there are none to invite them; but where there are ſome already, it is eaſy to increaſe their numbers, by anticipating all their wants, by not frightening them, by ſuffering them to hatch with ſecurity, and by never diſturbing the young ones in their neſt; for by theſe means, ſuch as

as there are abide there, and thoſe which come after them continue. This grove was already in being, though it was divided from the orchard; Eloiſa has only encloſed it by a quickſet hedge, removed that which parted it, and enlarged and adorned it with new deſigns. You ſee to the right and left of the walk which leads to it two ſpaces filled with a confuſed mixture of graſs, ſtraw, and all ſorts of plants. She orders them every year to be ſown with corn, millet, turnſol, hemp-ſeed, vetch, and in general all ſorts of grain which birds are fond of, and nothing is ever reaped. Beſides this, almoſt every day ſhe or I bring them ſomething to eat, and when we neglect, Fanny ſupplies our place. They are ſupplied with water, as you ſee, very eaſily. Mrs. Wolmar carries her attention ſo far as to provide for them, every ſpring, little heaps of hair, ſtraw, wool, moſs, and other materials proper to build their neſts. Thus, by their having materials at hand, proviſions in abundance, and by the great care we take to ſecure them from their enemies*, the uninterrupted tranquillity they enjoy induces them to lay their eggs in this convenient place, where they want for nothing, and where nobody diſturbs them. Thus, the habitation of the fathers becomes the abode of the children, and the colony thrives and multiplies."

"Ah! (ſaid Eloiſa) do you ſee nothing more? No one thinks beyond himſelf; but the affection of

* The mice, owls, hawks, and, above all, children.

of a conſtant pair, the zeal of their domeſtick concerns, paternal and maternal fondneſs, all this is loſt upon you. Had you been here two months ago, you might have feaſted your eyes with the moſt lovely ſight, and have gratified your feelings with the moſt tender ſenſations in nature."—"Madam (ſaid I, ſomewhat gravely) you are a wife and a mother; theſe are pleaſures of which it becomes you to be ſuſceptible." Mr. Wolmar then taking me cordially by the hand, ſaid, "You have friends, and thoſe friends have children; how can you be a ſtranger to paternal affection?" I looked at him, I looked at Eloiſa, they looked at each other, and caſt ſuch an affecting eye upon me, that embracing them alternately, I ſaid with tender emotion, "They are as dear to me as to yourſelf." I do not know by what ſtrange effect a ſingle word can make ſuch an alteration in our minds, but ſince that moment Mr. Wolmar appears to me quite another man, and I conſider him leſs in the light of a huſband to her whom I have ſo long adored, as in that of the father of two children for whom I would lay down my life.

I was going to walk round the baſon, in order to draw nearer to this delightful aſylum, and its little inhabitants, but Mrs. Wolmar checked me. "Nobody (ſays ſhe) goes to diſturb them in their dwelling, and you are the firſt of our gueſts whom I ever brought ſo far. There are four keys to this orchard, of which my father and we have each of us one: Fanny has

has the fourth, as ſuperintendant, and to bring the children here now and then; the value of which favour is greatly enhanced by the extreme circumſpection which is required of them while they are here. Even Guſtin never comes hither without one of the four: when the two ſpring months are over, in which his labours are uſeful, he ſcarce ever comes hither afterwards, and all the reſt we do ourſelves. "Thus (ſaid I) for fear of making your birds ſlaves to you, you make yourſelves ſlaves to your birds."—"This (ſhe replied) is exactly the ſentiment of a tyrant, who never thinks that he enjoys liberty, but while he is diſturbing the freedom of others."

As we were coming back, Mr. Wolmar threw a handful of barley into the baſon, and on looking into it, I perceived ſome little fiſh. "Ah, ah, (ſaid I, immediately) here are ſome priſoners, nevertheleſs."—"Yes (ſaid he) they are priſoners of war, who have had their lives ſpared."—"Without doubt (added his wife.) Some time ſince Fanny ſtole two perch out of the kitchen, and brought them hither without my knowledge. I leave them here, for fear of offending her if I ſent them to the lake; for it is better to confine the fiſh in too narrow a compaſs, than to diſoblige a worthy creature."—"You are in the right (ſaid I) and the fiſh are not much to be pitied for having eſcaped from the frying-pan into the water."

"Well,

"Well, how does it appear to you? (ſaid ſhe, as we were coming back) are you got to the end of the world yet?"—"No (I replied) I am quite out of the world, and you have in truth tranſported me into Elyſium."—"The pompous name ſhe has given this orchard (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) very well deſerves that raillery. Be modeſt in your commendation of childiſh amuſements, and be aſſured that they have never entrenched on the concerns of a miſtreſs of a family."—"I know it, I am ſure of it (I replied) and childiſh amuſements pleaſe me more in this way, than the labours of men.

"Still there is one thing here (I continued) which I cannot conceive: which is, that though a place ſo different from what it was can never have been altered to its preſent ſtate but by great care and culture, yet I can no where diſcover the leaſt trace of cultivation. Every thing is verdant, freſh, and vigorous, and the hand of the gardener is no where to be diſcerned: nothing contradicts the idea of a deſert iſland, which ſtruck me at my firſt enterance, and I cannot perceive any footſteps of men."—"O (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) it is becauſe they have taken great pains to efface them. I have been frequently witneſs to, and ſometimes an accomplice in this roguery. They ſow all the cultivated ſpots with graſs, which preſently hides all appearance of culture. In the winter, they cover all the dry and barren ſpots with ſome lays of manure; the manure eats up the moſs, revives the graſs and the plants;

plants; the trees themſelves do not fare the worſe, and in the ſummer there is nothing of it to be ſeen. With regard to the moſs which covers ſome of the walks, Lord B—— ſent us the ſecret of making it grow from England. Theſe two ſides (he continued) were encloſed with walls; the walls have been covered, not with hedges, but with thick trees, which make the boundaries of the place appear like the beginning of a wood. The two other ſides are ſecured by ſtrong thickſet hedges, well ſtocked with maple, hawthorn, holy-oak, privet, and other ſmall trees, which deſtroy the appearance of the hedges, and make them look more like coppice-woods. You ſee nothing here in an exact row, nothing level; the line never entered this place; nature plants nothing by the line; the affected irregularity of the winding walks is managed with art, in order to prolong the walk, to hide the boundaries of the iſland, and to enlarge its extent in appearance, without making inconvenient and too frequent turnings*."

Upon conſidering the whole, I thought it ſomewhat extraordinary that they ſhould take ſo much pains to conceal the labour they had been at; would it not have been better to have taken no ſuch pains? "Notwithſtanding all we have told you (replied Eloiſa) you judge of the labour

* Like thoſe faſhionable little woods, ſo ridiculouſly twiſted, that you are obliged to walk in a zigzag manner, and to make a *pirouette* at every ſtep.

labour from its effect, and you deceive yourſelf. All that you ſee are wild and vigorous plants, which need only to be put into the earth, and which afterwards ſpring up of themſelves. Beſides, nature ſeems deſirous of hiding her real charms from the ſight of men, becauſe they are too little ſenſible of them, and disfigure them when they are within their reach; ſhe flies from publick places; it is in the tops of mountains, in the midſt of foreſts, in deſert iſlands, that ſhe diſplays her moſt affecting charms. They who are in love with her, and cannot go ſo far in purſuit of her, are forced to do her violence, by obliging her, in ſome meaſure, to come and dwell with them, and all this cannot be effected without ſome degree of illuſion."

At theſe words, I was ſtruck with an idea which made them laugh. "I am ſuppoſing to myſelf (ſaid I) ſome rich man to be maſter of this houſe, and to bring an architect who is paid an extravagant price for ſpoiling nature. With what diſdain would he enter this plain and ſimple ſpot! With what contempt would he order theſe ragged plants to be torn up! What fine lines he would draw! What fine walks he would cut! What fine geeſe-feet, what fine trees in the ſhape of umbrellas and fans he would make! What fine arbour-work—nicely cut out! What beautiful graſs-plats of fine Engliſh turf, round, ſquare, ſloping, oval! What fine yew-trees cut in the ſhape of dragons, pagods, marmoſets, and all

all ſorts of monſters! With what fine vaſes of braſs, with what fine fruit in ſtone he would decorate his garden!*" ... "When he had done all this (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) he would have made a very fine place, which would ſcarce ever be frequented, and from whence one ſhould always go with eagerneſs to enjoy the country; a diſmal place, where nobody would walk, but only uſe it as a thoroughfare when they were ſetting out; whereas, in my rural rambles, I often make haſte to return, that I may walk here.

"I ſee nothing in thoſe extenſive grounds ſo laviſhly ornamented, but the vanity of the proprietor and of the artiſt, who being eager to diſplay, the one his riches and the other his talents, only contribute, at a vaſt expenſe, to tire thoſe who would enjoy their works. A falſe taſte of grandeur, which was never deſigned for man, poiſons all his pleaſures. An air of greatneſs has always ſomething melancholy in it; it leads us to conſider the wretchedneſs of thoſe who affect it. In the midſt of theſe graſs-plats and fine walks, the little individual does not grow greater; a tree twenty feet high will ſhelter him as well as one of ſixty†; he never occupies a ſpace

* I am perſuaded, that ſome time hence gardens will be furniſhed with nothing belonging to the country; neither plants nor trees will be ſuffered to grow in them: we ſhall ſee nothing but China flowers, baboons, arbour-work, gravel of all colours, and fine vaſes with nothing in them.

† He might have enlarged on the bad taſte of lopping trees in ſuch a ridiculous manner, to make them ſhoot into the

ſpace of more than three feet, and in the midſt of his immenſe poſſeſſions is loſt like a poor worm.

"There is another taſte directly oppoſite to this, and ſtill more ridiculous, becauſe it does not allow us the pleaſure of walking, for which gardens were intended."—"I underſtand you (ſaid I;) you allude to thoſe petty virtuoſi, who die away at the ſight of a ranuncula, and fall proſtrate before a tulip." Hereupon, my lord, I gave them an account of what happened to me formerly at London, in the flower-garden into which we were introduced with ſo much ceremony, and where we ſaw all the treaſures of Holland diſplayed with ſo much luſtre upon four beds of dung. I did not forget the ceremony of the umbrella and the little rod with which they honoured me, unworthy as I was, as well as the reſt of the ſpectators. I modeſtly acknowledged how, by endeavouring to appear a virtuoſo in my turn, and venturing to fall in extacies at the ſight of a tulip which ſeemed to be of a fine ſhape, and of a lively colour, I was mocked, hooted at, and hiſſed by all the connoiſſeurs, and how the floriſt who deſpiſed the flower, deſpiſed its

the clouds, by taking off their fine tops, by draining the ſap, and preventing their thriving. This method, it is true, ſupplies the gardeners with wood, but it robs the kingdom of it, which is not overſtocked already. One would imagine that nature was different in France from what it is in any other part of the world, they take ſo much pains to diſfigure her. The parks are planted with nothing but long poles; they are like ſo many foreſts of maſts, and you walk in the midſt of woods without finding any ſhelter.

its panegyriſt likewiſe to that degree, that he did not even deign to look at me all the time we were together. I added, that I ſuppoſed he highly regretted having proſtituted his rod and umbrella on one ſo unworthy.

"This taſte (ſaid Mr. Wolmar) when it degenerates into a paſſion, has ſomething idle and little in it, which renders it puerile, and ridiculouſly expenſive. The other, at leaſt, is noble, grand, and has ſomething real in it. But what is the value of a curious root, which an inſect gnaws or ſpoils perhaps as ſoon as it is purchaſed, or of a flower which is beautiful at noonday, and fades before ſun-ſet; what ſignifies a mere imaginary beauty, which is only obvious to the eyes of virtuoſi, and which is a beauty only becauſe they will have it to be ſo? The time will come when they will require different kinds of beauty in flowers from that which they ſeek after at preſent, and with as good reaſon; then you will be the connoiſſeur in your turn, and your virtuoſo will appear ignorant. All theſe trifling attentions, which degenerate into a kind of ſtudy, are unbecoming a rational being, who would keep his body in moderate exerciſe, or relieve his mind by amuſing himſelf in a walk with his friends. Flowers were made to delight our eyes as we paſs along, and not to be ſo curiouſly anatomized*. See the queen of them ſhine

* The ſagacious Wolmar had not ſufficiently reflected. Was he, who was ſo ſkilful in judging of men, ſo bad a judge

ſhine in every part of the orchard. It perfumes the air, it raviſhes the eyes, and coſts neither care nor culture. It is for this reaſon that floriſts deſpiſe it; nature has made it ſo lovely, that they cannot add to it any borrowed beauty, and as they cannot plague themſelves with cultivating it, they find nothing in it which flatters their fancy. The miſtake of your pretenders to taſte, is, that they are deſirous of introducing art in every thing, and are never ſatisfied unleſs the art appears; whereas, true taſte conſiſts in concealing it, eſpecially when it concerns any of the works of Nature. To what purpoſe are thoſe ſtraight gravel walks which we meet with continually; and thoſe ſtars which are ſo far from making a park appear more extenſive to the view, as is commonly ſuppoſed, that they only contribute aukwardly to diſcover its boundaries? Do you ever ſee fine gravel in woods, or is that kind of gravel ſofter to the feet than moſs or down? Does nature conſtantly make uſe of the ſquare or rule? Are they afraid leſt ſhe ſhould be viſible in ſome ſpots, notwithſtanding all their care to disfigure her? Upon the whole, it is droll enough to ſee them affect to walk in a ſtraight line, that they may ſooner reach the end, as if they were tired of walking before they have well begun? Would not one imagine, by their taking the ſhorteſt cut, that

judge of Nature? Did he not know that if the Authour of Nature diſplays his greatneſs in great things, he appears ſtill greater in thoſe which are the leaſt?

that they were going a journey inſtead of a walk, and that they were in a hurry to get out as ſoon as they come in?

"How will a man of taſte act, who lives to reliſh life, who knows how to enjoy himſelf, who purſues real and ſimple pleaſures, and who is inclined to make a walk before his houſe? He will make it ſo convenient and agreeable, that he may enjoy it every hour of the day, and yet ſo natural and ſimple, that it will ſeem as if he had done nothing. He will introduce water, and will make the walk verdant, cool, and ſhady; for nature herſelf unites theſe properties. He will beſtow no attention on ſymmetry, which is the bane of nature and variety, and the walks of gardens in general are ſo like each other, that we always fancy ourſelves in the ſame. He will make the ground ſmooth, in order to walk more conveniently; but the two ſides of his walks will not be exactly parallel; their direction will not always be recti-lineal; they will be ſomewhat irregular, like the ſteps of an indolent man, who ſaunters in his walk: he will not be anxious about opening diſtant perſpectives. The taſte for perſpective and diſtant views proceeds from the diſpoſition of men in general, who are never ſatisfied with the place where they are. They are always deſirous of what is diſtant from them, and the artiſt who cannot make them contented with the objects around them, flies to this reſource to amuſe them; but ſuch a man as I ſpeak of is under no ſuch

inquietudes, and when he is agreeably fixed, he does not deſire to be elſewhere. Here, for example, we have no proſpect, and we are very well ſatisfied without any. We are willing to think that all the charms of nature are encloſed here, and I ſhould be very much afraid leſt a diſtant view ſhould take off a good deal of the beauty from this walk*. Certainly, he who would not chooſe to paſs his days in this ſimple and pleaſant place is not maſter of true taſte, or of a vigorous mind. I confeſs that one ought not to make a parade of bringing ſtrangers hither; but then we can enjoy it ourſelves, without ſhowing it to any one."

"Sir (ſaid I) thoſe rich people who have ſuch fine gardens have very good reaſons for not chooſing to walk alone, or to be in company with

* I do not know whether there has ever been an attempt to give a ſlight curve to theſe long walks, that the eye may not be able to reach the end of the walk, and that the oppoſite extremity may be hid from the ſpectator. It is true, the beauty of the proſpects in perſpective would be loſt by theſe means; but proprietors would reap one advantage which they generally prize at a high rate, which is that of making their grounds more extenſive in appearance; and in the midſt of a ſtarry plot thus bounded, one might think himſelf in a vaſt park. I am perſuaded that the walk would be leſs tireſome, though more ſolitary; for, whatever gives play to the imagination excites ideas, and nouriſhes the mind: but gardeners are people who have no idea of theſe things. How often, in a rural ſpot, would the pencil drop from their hands, as it did from Le Noſtre's in St. James's-Park, if they knew like him what gave life to nature, and intereſted the beholder!

with themſelves only; therefore, they are in the right to lay them out for the pleaſure of others. Beſides, I have ſeen gardens in China, made after your taſte, and laid out with ſo much art, that the art was not ſeen; but in ſuch a coſtly manner, and kept up at ſuch a vaſt expenſe, that that ſingle idea deſtroyed all the pleaſure I had in viewing them. There were rocks, grottos, and artificial caſcades, in level and ſandy places, where there was nothing but ſpring-water; there were flowers and curious plants of all the climates in China and Tartary, collected and cultivated in the ſame ſoil. It is true, there were no fine walks or regular compartments; but you might ſee curioſities heaped together with profuſion, which in nature are only to be found ſeparate and ſcattered. Nature was there repreſented under a thouſand various forms, and yet the whole taken together was not natural. Here neither earth nor ſtone are tranſplanted, you have neither pumps nor reſervoirs, you have no occaſion for green-houſes, or ſtoves, or bell-glaſſes, or ſtraw-beds. A plain ſpot of ground has been improved by a few ſimple ornaments. A few common herbs and trees, and a few purling ſtreams, which flow without pomp or conſtraint, have contributed to embelliſh it. It is an amuſement which has coſt little trouble, and the ſimplicity of it is an additional pleaſure to the beholder. I can conceive that this place might be made ſtill more agreeable, and yet be infinitely leſs pleaſing to me. Such, for example, is Lord

Cobham's celebrated park at Stowe. It conſiſts of places extremely beautiful and pictureſque, modelled after the faſhion of different countries; and in which every thing appears natural except their conjunction, as in the gardens of China, which I juſt now mentioned. The proprietor who made this ſtately ſolitude has even erected ruins, temples, old buildings; and different ages, as well as different places, are collected with more than mortal magnificence. This is the very thing I diſlike. I would have the amuſements of mankind carry an air of eaſe with them which does not put one in mind of their weakneſs, and that while we admire theſe curioſities, our imagination may not be diſturbed by reflecting on the vaſt ſums of money and labour they have coſt. Are we not deſtined to trouble enough, without making our amuſements a fatigue?

"I have but one objection (added I, looking at Eloiſa) to make to your Elyſium, but which you will probably think of ſome weight, which is, that it is a ſuperfluous amuſement. To what purpoſe was it to make a new walk, when you have ſuch beautiful groves on the other ſide of the houſe, which you neglect?"—"That is true (ſaid ſhe) ſomewhat diſconcerted, but I like this better."—"If you had thoroughly reflected on the propriety of your queſtion before you had made it (ſaid Mr. Wolmar, interrupting us) it might be imputed to you as more than an indiſcretion. My wife has never ſet her foot in thoſe groves ſince ſhe has been married. I know the reaſon, though

though ſhe has always kept it a ſecret from me. You, who are no ſtranger to it, learn to reſpect the ſpot where you are; it has been planted by the hands of virtue."

I had ſcarce received this juſt reprimand, when the little family, led by Fanny, came in as we were going out. Theſe three lovely children ran and embraced their parents; I likewiſe ſhared their little careſſes. Eloiſa and I returned into Elyſium, to take a little turn with them; and afterwards went to join Mr. Wolmar, who was talking to ſome workmen. In our way, ſhe told me, that ſhe no ſooner became a mother, than an idea ſtruck into her mind, with reſpect to that walk, which increaſed her zeal for embelliſhing it. "I had an eye (ſaid ſhe) to the health and amuſement of my children as they grew up. It requires more care than labour to keep up this place; it is more eſſential to give a certain turn to the branches of the plants, than to dig and cultivate the ground; I intend one day to make gardeners of my little ones: they ſhall have ſufficient exerciſe to ſtrengthen their conſtitution, and not enough to enfeeble it. Beſides, what is too much for their age ſhall be done by others, and they ſhall confine themſelves to ſuch little works as may amuſe them. I cannot deſcribe (ſays ſhe) what pleaſure I enjoy in imagining my infants buſy in returning thoſe little attentions which I now beſtow on them with ſuch ſatisfaction, and the joy of which their tender hearts

will be ſuſceptible, when they ſee their mother walking with delight under the ſhades which have been formed by their own hands. In truth, my friend (ſaid ſhe) with an affecting tone, time thus ſpent is an emblem of the felicity of the next world, and it was not without reaſon that, reflecting on theſe ſcenes, I chriſtened this place before-hand by the name of Elyſium." My lord, this incomparable woman is as amiable in the character of a mother as in that of a wife, a friend, a daughter; and to the eternal puniſhment of my ſoul, ſhe was thus lovely when my miſtreſs.

Tranſported with this delightful place, I entreated them in the evening to conſent that, during my ſtay, Fanny ſhould entruſt me with her key, and conſign to me the office of feeding the birds. Eloiſa immediately ſent a ſack of grain to my chamber, and gave me her own key. I cannot tell for what reaſon, but I accepted it with a kind of concern, and it ſeemed as if Mr. Wolmar's would have been more acceptable to me.

In the morning I roſe early, and, with all the eagerneſs of a child, went to lock myſelf in the deſert iſland. What agreeable ideas did I hope to carry with me into that ſolitary place, where the mild aſpect of nature alone was ſufficient to baniſh from my remembrance all that new-coined ſyſtem which had made me ſo miſerable! All the objects around me will be the work of her whom I adored. In every thing about me I ſhall behold her image; I ſhall ſee nothing which her hand has not touched; I ſhall kiſs the flowers

flowers which have been her carpet; I ſhall inhale, with the morning dew, the air which ſhe has breathed; the taſte ſhe has diſplayed in her amuſements will bring all her charms preſent to my imagination, and in every thing ſhe will appear the Eloiſa of my ſoul.

As I entered Elyſium with this temper of mind, I ſuddenly recollected the laſt word which Mr. Wolmar ſaid to me yeſterday very near the ſame ſpot. The recollection of that ſingle word inſtantly changed my whole frame of mind. I thought that I beheld the image of virtue, where I expected to find that of pleaſure. That image intruded on my imagination with the charms of Mrs. Wolmar, and for the firſt time ſince my return, I ſaw Eloiſa in her abſence; not ſuch as ſhe appeared to me formerly, and as I ſtill love to repreſent her, but ſuch as ſhe appears to my eyes every day. My lord, I imagined that I beheld that amiable, that chaſte, that virtuous woman, in the midſt of the train which ſurrounded her yeſterday. I ſaw thoſe three lovely children, thoſe honourable and precious pledges of conjugal union and tender friendſhip, play about her, and give and receive a thouſand affecting embraces. At her ſide I beheld the grave Wolmar, that huſband ſo beloved, ſo happy, and ſo worthy of felicity. I imagined that I could perceive his judicious and penetrating eye pierce to the very bottom of my ſoul, and make me bluſh again; I fancied that I heard him utter reproaches which I too well deſerved, and repeat

lectures which I had attended in vain. Laſt in her train I ſaw Fanny Regnard, a lively inſtance of the triumph of virtue and humanity over the moſt ardent paſſion. Ah! what guilty thought could reach ſo far as her, through ſuch an impervious guard! With what indignation I ſuppreſſed the ſhameful tranſports of a criminal, and ſcarce extinguiſhed paſſion, and how I ſhould have deſpiſed myſelf had I contaminated ſuch a raviſhing ſcene of honour and innocence with a ſingle ſigh. I recalled to mind the reflexions ſhe made as we were going out, then my imagination attending her into that futurity on which ſhe delights to contemplate, I ſaw that affectionate mother wipe the ſweat from her children's foreheads, kiſs their ruddy cheeks, and devote that heart, which was formed for love, to the moſt tender ſentiments of nature. There was nothing, even to the very name of Elyſium, but what contributed to rectify my rambling imagination, and to inſpire my ſoul with a calm far preferable to the agitation of the moſt ſeductive paſſions. The word Elyſium ſeemed to me an emblem of the purity of her mind who adopted it; and I concluded that ſhe would never have made choice of that name, had ſhe been tormented with a troubled conſcience. "Peace, (ſaid I) reigns in the inmoſt receſſes of her ſoul, as in this aſylum which ſhe has named."

I propoſed to myſelf an agreeable reverie, and my reflexions there were more agreeable even than I expected. I paſſed two hours in Elyſium, which

which were not inferiour to any time I ever ſpent. In obſerving with what rapidity and delight they paſſed away, I perceived that there was a kind of felicity in meditating on honeſt reflexions, which the wicked never know, and which conſiſts in being pleaſed with one's ſelf. If we were to reflect on this without prejudice, I don't know any other pleaſure can equal it. I perceive at leaſt, that one who loves ſolitude, as I do, ought to be extremely cautious not to do any thing which may make it tormenting. Perhaps theſe principles may lead us to diſcover the ſpring of the falſe judgement of mankind with regard to vice and virtue; for the enjoyment of virtue is all internal, and is only perceived by him who feels it: but all the advantages of vice ſtrike the imagination of others, and only he who has purchaſed them knows what they coſt.

Se a ciaſcun l'interno affanno
Si legeſſe in fronte ſcritto,
Quanti mai, che invidia fanno
*Ci farebbero pieta?**

The aching heart and ſmiling face
Thus may our envy move,
Which, did we know the wretched's caſe,
Would our compaſſion prove.

* He might have added the concluſion, which is very fine, and as appoſite to the ſubject.

Si vedria che i lor nemici
Anno in ſeno, eſi reduce
Nel parere a noi felici
Ogni lor felicita.

So when, reduc'd or bent with years,
Poor mortals ſigh for reſt,
Each, wretched as he yet appears,
With ſomething ſtill is bleſt.

As it grew late before I perceived it, Mr. Wolmar came to join me, and acquaint me that Eloiſa and the tea waited for me. "It is you yourſelves (ſaid I, making an apology) who prevented my coming ſooner: I was ſo delighted with the evening I ſpent yeſterday, that I went thither again to enjoy this morning; luckily there is no harm done, and as you have waited for me, my morning is not loſt."—"That is true (ſaid Mr. Wolmar;) it would be better to wait till noon, than loſe the pleaſure of breakfaſting together. Strangers are never admitted into my room in the morning, but breakfaſt in their own. Breakfaſt is the repaſt of intimates, ſervants are excluded, and impertinents never appear at that time; we then declare all we think, we reveal all our ſecrets, we diſguiſe none of our ſentiments; we can then enjoy the delights of intimacy and confidence, without indiſcretion. It is almoſt the only time in which we are allowed to appear what we really are; why can't it laſt the day through!"— Ah, Eloiſa! (I was ready to ſay) this is an intereſting wiſh! but I was ſilent. The firſt thing I learnt to ſuppreſs with my love, was flattery. To praiſe people to their face is but to tax them with vanity. You know, my lord, whether Mrs. Wolmar deſerves this reproach. No; I reſpect her too much, not to reſpect her in ſilence. Is it not a ſufficient commendation of her, to liſten to her, and obſerve her conduct?

LETTER

LETTER CXXXI.

MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

IT is decreed, my dear friend, that you are on all occaſions to be my protectreſs againſt myſelf, and that after having delivered me from the ſnares which my affections laid for me, you are yet to reſcue me from thoſe which reaſon ſpreads to entrap me. After ſo many cruel inſtances, I have learned to guard againſt miſtakes, as much as againſt my paſſions, which are frequently the cauſe of them. Why had I not the ſame precaution always! If in time paſt I had relied leſs on the light of my own underſtanding, I ſhould have had leſs reaſon to bluſh at my ſentiments.

Do not be alarmed at this preamble, I ſhould be unworthy your friendſhip, if I was ſtill under a neceſſity of conſulting you upon diſmal ſubjects. Guilt was always a ſtranger to my heart, and I dare believe it to be more diſtant from me now than ever. Therefore, Clara, attend to me patiently, and believe that I ſhall never need your advice in difficulties which honour alone can reſolve.

During theſe ſix years which I have lived with Mr. Wolmar in the moſt perfect union which can ſubſiſt between a married couple, you know that he never talked to me either about his fa-

mily, or himſelf, and that having received him from a father as ſollicitous for his daughter's happineſs as jealous of the honour of his family, I never expreſſed any eagerneſs to know more of his concerns than he thought proper to communicate. Satisfied with being indebted to him for my honour, my repoſe, my reaſon, my children, and all that can render me eſtimable in my own eyes, beſides the life of him who gave me being, I was convinced that the particulars concerning him, to which I was a ſtranger, would not falſify what I knew of him, and there was no occaſion for my knowing more, in order to love, eſteem, and honour him, as much as poſſible.

This morning at breakfaſt he propoſed our taking a little walk before the heat of the day came on; then, under a pretence of not going through the country in a morning deſhabille, as he ſaid, he led us into the woods, and exactly into that wood where all the misfortunes of my life commenced. As I approached that fatal ſpot, I felt a violent palpitation of heart, and ſhould have refuſed to have gone in, if ſhame had not checked me, and if the recollection of a word which dropped the other day in Elyſium had not made me dread the interpretations which might have been paſſed on ſuch a refuſal. I do not know whether the philoſopher was more compoſed; but ſome time after, having caſt my eyes upon him by chance, I found his countenance pale and altered,

altered, and I cannot expreſs to you the uneaſineſs it gave me.

On entering into the wood, I perceived my huſband caſt a glance towards me, and ſmile. He ſat down between us, and after a moment's pauſe, taking us both by the hand, "My dear children (ſaid he) I begin to perceive that my ſchemes will not be fruitleſs, and that we three may be connected by a laſting attachment, capable of promoting our common good, and procuring me ſome comfort to alleviate the troubles of approaching old age: but I am better acquainted with you two than you are with me; it is but juſt to make every thing equal among us, and though I have nothing very intereſting to impart, yet as you have no ſecrets hidden from me, I will have none concealed from you."

He then revealed to us the myſtery of his birth, which had hitherto been known to no one but my father. When you are acquainted with it, you will imagine what great temper and moderation a man muſt be maſter of, who was able to conceal ſuch a ſecret from his wife during ſix years; but it is no pain to him to keep ſuch a ſecret, and he thinks too ſlightly of it, to be obliged to exert any vaſt efforts to conceal it.

"I will not detain you (ſaid he) with relating the occurrences of my life. It is of leſs importance to you to be acquainted with my adventures than with my character. The former

are ſimple in their nature like the latter, and when you know what I am, you will eaſily imagine what I was capable of doing. My mind is naturally calm, and my affections temperate. I am one of thoſe men, whom people think they reproach, when they call them inſenſible; that is, when they upbraid them with having no paſſion which may impel them to ſwerve from the true direction of human nature. Being but little ſuſceptible of pleaſure or grief, I receive but faint impreſſions from thoſe intereſting ſentiments of humanity, which make the affections of others our own. If I feel uneaſineſs when I ſee the worthy in diſtreſs, it is not without reaſon that my compaſſion is moved, for when I ſee the wicked ſuffer, I have no pity for them. My only active principle is a natural love of order, and the concurrence of the accidents of fortune with the conduct of mankind well combined together pleaſes me exactly like beautiful ſymmetry in a picture, or like a piece well repreſented on the ſtage. If I have any ruling paſſion, it is that of obſervation: I love to read the hearts of mankind. As my own ſeldom miſleads me, as I make my obſervations with a diſintereſted and diſpaſſionate temper, and as I have acquired ſome ſagacity by long experience, I am ſeldom deceived in my judgement; this advantage, therefore, is the only recompenſe which ſelf-love receives from my conſtant ſtudies: for I am not fond of acting a part, but

but only of obſerving others. Society is agreeable to me for the ſake of contemplation, and not as a member of it. If I could alter the nature of my being, and become a living eye, I would willingly make the exchange. Therefore, my indifference about mankind does not make me independent of them; without being ſollicitous to be ſeen, I want to ſee them, and though they are not dear to me, they are neceſſary.

"The two firſt characters in ſociety which I had an opportunity of obſerving were courtiers and valets; two orders of men who differ more in appearance than fact, but ſo little worthy of being attended to, and ſo eaſily read, that I was tired of them at firſt ſight. By quitting the court, where every thing is preſently ſeen, I ſecured myſelf, without knowing it, from the danger which threatened me, and which I ſhould not have eſcaped. I changed my name, and having a deſire to be acquainted with military men, I ſollicited admiſſion into the ſervice of a foreign prince; it was there that I had the happineſs of being uſeful to your father, who was impelled by deſpair, for having killed his friend, to expoſe himſelf raſhly and contrary to his duty. The grateful and ſuſceptible heart of a brave officer began then to give me a better opinion of human nature. He attached himſelf to me with that zealous friendſhip which it was impoſſible for me not to return, and from that time we formed conexions which have every

day

day grown ſtronger. I diſcovered in this new ſtate of my mind, that intereſt is not always, as I had ſuppoſed, the ſole motive which influences human conduct, and that among the crowd of prejudices which are oppoſite to virtue, there are ſome likewiſe which are favourable to it. I found that the general character of mankind was founded on a kind of ſelf-love indifferent in itſelf, and either good or bad according to the accidents which modify it, and which depend on cuſtoms, laws, rank, fortune, and every circumſtance relative to human policy. I, therefore, indulged my inclination, and deſpiſing the vain notions of wordly condition, I ſucceſſively threw myſelf into all the different ſituations in life, which might enable me to compare them together, and know one by the other. I perceived, as you have obſerved in one of your letters (ſaid he to St. Preux) that we ſee nothing if we reſt ſatisfied with looking on, that we ought to act ourſelves in order to judge of men's actions, and I made myſelf an actor, to qualify myſelf for a ſpectator, We can always lower ourſelves with eaſe; and I ſtooped to a variety of ſituations which no man of my ſtation ever condeſcended to. I even became a peaſant, and when Eloiſa made me her gardener, ſhe did not find me ſuch a novice in the buſineſs as ſhe might have expected.

"Beſides gaining a thorough knowledge of mankind, which indolent philoſophy only attains in appearance, I found another advantage, which I never

I never expected. This was the opportunity it afforded me of improving, by an active life, that love of order I derived from nature, and of acquiring a new reliſh for virtue by the pleaſure of contributing towards it. This ſentiment made me leſs ſpeculative, attached me ſomewhat more to myſelf, and from a natural conſequence of this progreſs, I perceived that I was alone. Solitude, which was always tireſome to me, became hideous, and I could not hope to eſcape it long. Though I did not grow leſs diſpaſſionate, I found the want of ſome connexion; the idea of decay, without any one to comfort me, afflicted me by anticipation, and for the firſt time in my life, I experienced melancholy and uneaſineſs. I communicated my troubles to the Baron d'Etange. 'You muſt not (ſaid he) grow an old bachelor. I myſelf, after having lived independent as it were, in a ſtate of matrimony, find that I have a deſire of returning to the duties of a huſband and a father, and I am going to repoſe myſelf in the midſt of my family. It depends on yourſelf to make my family your own, and to ſupply the place of the ſon whom I have loſt. I have an only daughter to marry; ſhe is not deſtitute of merit; ſhe has a ſenſibility of mind, and the love of her duty makes her love every thing relative to it. She is neither a beauty, nor a prodigy of underſtanding; but come and ſee her, and believe me, that if ſhe does not affect you, no woman will ever make an impreſſion on you.' I came, I ſaw you, Eloiſa,

and

and found that your father had reported modeſtly of you. Your tranſports, the tears of joy you ſhed when you embraced him, gave me the firſt, or rather the only emotion I ever experienced in my life. If the impreſſion was ſlight, it was the only one I felt, and our ſenſations are ſtrong only in proportion to thoſe which oppoſe them. Three years abſence made no change in my inclinations. I was no ſtranger to the ſtate of your's on my return, and on this occaſion I muſt make you a return for the confeſſion which has coſt you ſo dear." Judge, my dear Clara, with what extraordinary ſurpriſe I learnt that all my ſecrets had been diſcovered to him before our marriage, and that he had wedded me, knowing me to be the property of another.

"This conduct (continued Mr. Wolmar) was unpardonable. I offended againſt delicacy; I ſinned againſt prudence; I expoſed your honour and my own; I ſhould have been apprehenſive of plunging you and myſelf into irretrievable calamities; but I loved you, and I loved nothing but you. Every thing elſe was indifferent to me. How is it poſſible to reſtrain a paſſion, be it ever ſo weak, when it has no counterpoiſe? This is the inconvenience of calm and diſpaſſionate tempers. Every thing goes right while their inſenſibility ſecures them from temptations; but if one happens to touch them, they are conquered as ſoon as they are attacked, and reaſon, which governs while ſhe ſways alone, has no power to reſiſt the ſlighteſt effort. I was tempted

tempted but once, and I gave way to it. If the intoxication of any other paſſion had rendered me wavering, I ſhould have fallen, every falſe ſtep I took; none but ſpirited ſouls are able to ſtruggle and conquer. All great efforts, all ſublime actions, are their province; cool reaſon never achieved any thing illuſtrious, and we can only triumph over our paſſions by oppoſing one againſt another. When virtue gains the aſcendancy, ſhe reigns alone, and keeps all in due poiſe; this forms the true philoſopher, who is as much expoſed to the aſſaults of paſſion as another, but who alone is capable of ſubduing them by their own force, as a pilot ſteers through adverſe winds.

"You find that I do not attempt to extenuate my fault; had it been one, I ſhould infallibly have committed it; but I knew you, Eloiſa, and was guilty of none when I married you. I perceived that all my proſpect of happineſs depended on you alone, and that if any one was capable of making you happy, it was myſelf. I knew that peace and innocence were eſſential to your mind, that the affection with which it was pre-engaged could not afford them, and that nothing could baniſh love but the horrour of guilt. I ſaw that your ſoul laboured under an oppreſſion which it could not ſhake off but by ſome new ſtruggle; and that to make you ſenſible how valuable you ſtill were, was the only way to render you truely eſtimable.

"Your

"Your heart was formed for love; I, therefore, ſlighted the diſproportion of age, which excluded me from a right of pretending to that affection, which he who was the object of it could not enjoy, and which it was impoſſible to obtain for any other. On the contrary, finding my life half ſpent, and that I had been ſuſceptible but of a ſingle impreſſion, I concluded that it would be laſting, and I pleaſed myſelf with the thoughts of preſerving it the reſt of my days. In all my tedious ſearches, I found nothing ſo eſtimable as yourſelf; I thought that what you could not effect no one in the world could accompliſh; I ventured to rely on your virtue, and I married you. The ſecreſy you obſerved did not ſurpriſe me: I knew the reaſon, and from your prudent conduct, I gueſſed how long it would laſt. From a regard to you, I copied your reſerve, and I would not deprive you of the honour of one day making me a confeſſion, which, I plainly perceived was at your tongue's end every minute. I have not been deceived in any particular; you have fully anſwered all I expected from you. When I made choice of a wife, I deſired to find in her an amiable, diſcreet, and happy companion. The firſt two requiſites have been obtained. I hope, my dear, that we ſhall not be diſappointed of the third."

At theſe words, in ſpite of all my endeavours not to interrupt him but by my tears, I could not forbear throwing myſelf round his neck, and

and crying out, "O my dear huſband! O thou beſt and moſt amiable of men! tell me what is wanting to complete my happineſs, but to promote your felicity, and to be more deſerving."—"You are as happy as you can be (ſaid he, interrupting me;) you deſerve to be ſo; but it is time to enjoy that felicity in peace, which has hitherto coſt you ſuch vaſt pains. If your fidelity had been all I required, that would have been enſured the moment you made me the promiſe; I wanted, moreover, to make it eaſy and agreeable to you, and we have both laboured to this end in concert, without communicating our views to each other. Eloiſa, we have ſucceeded better than you imagine, perhaps. The only fault I find in you is, that you do not reſume that confidence which you have a right to repoſe in yourſelf, and that you undervalue your own worth. Extreme diffidence is as dangerous as exceſſive confidence. As that raſhneſs which prompts us to attempts beyond our ſtrength renders our power ineffectual, ſo that timidity which prevents us from relying on ourſelves renders it uſeleſs. True prudence conſiſts in being thoroughly acquainted with the meaſure of our own power, and acting up to it. You have acquired an increaſe of ſtrength by changing your condition. You are no longer that unfortunate girl who bewailed the weakneſs ſhe indulged; you are the moſt virtuous of women; you are bound by no laws but thoſe of honour and duty;

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and the only fault that can now be imputed to you, is, that you retain too lively a ſenſe of your former indiſcretions. Inſtead of taking reproachful precautions againſt yourſelf, learn to depend upon yourſelf, and your confidence will increaſe your ſtrength. Baniſh that injurious diffidence, and think yourſelf happy in having made choice of an honeſt man, at an age which is liable to impoſition, and in having entertained a lover formerly, whom you may now enjoy as a friend, even under your huſband's eye. I was no ſooner made acquainted with your connexions, than I judged of you by each other. I perceived what enthuſiaſtick deluſion led you aſtray; it never operates but on ſuſceptible minds; it ſometimes ruins them, but it is by a charm which has power to ſeduce them alone. I judged that the ſame turn of mind which formed your attachment would break it as ſoon as it became criminal, and that vice might find an enterance, but never take root in ſuch hearts as your's.

" I conceived, moreover, that the connexion between you ought not to be broken; that there were ſo many laudable circumſtances attending your mutual attachment, that it ought rather to be rectified than deſtroyed; and that neither of the two could forget the other, without diminiſhing their own worth. I knew that great ſtruggles only ſerved to inflame ſtrong paſſions, and if violent efforts exerciſe the mind, they occaſion

caſion ſuch torments as by their continuance might ſubdue it. I took advantage of Eloiſa's gentleneſs to moderate the ſeverity of her reflexions. I nouriſhed her friendſhip for you (ſaid he to St. Preux); I baniſhed all immoderate paſſion, and I believe that I have preſerved you a greater ſhare of her affections than ſhe would have left you, had I abandoned her entirely to herſelf.

"My ſucceſs encouraged me, and I determined to attempt your cure as I had accompliſhed her's; for I had an eſteem for you, and notwithſtanding the prejudices of vice, I have always obſerved that every good end is to be obtained from ſuſceptible minds by means of confidence and ſincerity. I ſaw you; you did not deceive me; you will not deceive me; and though you are not yet what you ought to be, I find you more improved than you imagine, and I am better ſatisfied with you than you are with yourſelf. I know that my conduct has an extravagant appearance, and is repugnant to the common-received principles. But maxims become leſs general, in proportion as we are better acquainted with the human heart; and Eloiſa's huſband ought not to act like common men. My dear children (ſaid he, with a tone the more affecting as it came from a diſpaſſionate man) remain what you are, and we ſhall all be happy. Danger conſiſts chiefly in opinion; be not afraid of yourſelves, and you will have nothing to apprehend; only think on the preſent, and I will

will anſwer for the future. I cannot communicate any thing further to-day, but if my ſchemes ſucceed, and my hopes do not betray me, our deſtiny will be better fulfilled, and you two will be much happier than if you had enjoyed each other."

As we roſe, he embraced us, and would have us likewiſe embrace each other, on that ſpot... on that very ſpot where formerly... Clara, O my dear Clara, how dearly have you ever loved me! I made no reſiſtance. Alas! how indiſcreet would it have been to have made any! This kiſs was nothing like that which rendered the grove terrible to me. I ſilently congratulated myſelf, and I found that my heart was more changed than I had hitherto ventured to imagine.

As we were walking towards home, my huſband, taking me by the hand, ſtopped me, and ſhowing me the wood we had juſt left, he ſaid to me, ſmiling, "Eloiſa, be no longer afraid of this aſylum; it has not been lately profaned." You will not believe me, couſin, but I ſwear that he has ſome ſupernatural gift of reading one's inmoſt thoughts: may heaven continue it to him! Having ſuch reaſon to deſpiſe myſelf, it is certainly to this art that I am indebted for his indulgence.

You do not ſee yet any occaſion I have for your advice; patience, my angel! I am coming to that point; but the converſation which I have

have related was neceſſary to clear up what follows.

On our return, my huſband, who has long been expected at Etange, told me that he propoſed going thither to-morrow, that he ſhould ſee you in his way, and that he ſhould ſtay there five or ſix days. Without ſaying all I thought concerning ſuch an ill-timed journey, I told him that I imagined the neceſſity was not ſo indiſpenſable as to oblige Mr. Wolmar to leave his gueſt, whom he had himſelf invited to his houſe. "Would you have me (he replied) uſe ceremony with him, to remind him that he is not at home? I am like the Valaiſans for hoſpitality. I hope he will find their ſincerity here, and allow us to uſe their freedom." Perceiving that he would not underſtand me, I took another method, and endeavoured to perſuade our gueſt to take the journey with him. "You will find a ſpot (ſaid I) which has its beauties, and ſuch as you are fond of; you will viſit my patrimony, and that of my anceſtors; the intereſt you take in every thing which concerns me will not allow me to ſuppoſe that ſuch a ſight can be indifferent to you." My mouth was open to add, that the caſtle was like that of Lord B——, —who . . . but luckily I had time to bite my tongue. He anſwered me coolly, that I was in the right, and that he would do as I pleaſed. But Mr. Wolmar, who ſeemed determined to drive me to an extremity, replied that he ſhould do what was moſt agreeable to himſelf. "Which do you like

beſt, to go or to ſtay"—"To ſtay" (ſaid he, without heſitating.) "Well, ſtay then (rejoined my huſband, taking him by the hand:) you are a ſincere and honeſt man, and I am well pleaſed with that declaration." There was no room for much altercation between my huſband and me, and in the hearing of this third perſon. I was ſilent, but could not conceal my uneaſineſs ſo well but my huſband perceived it. "What! (ſaid he, with an air of diſcontent, St Preux being at a little diſtance from us) ſhall I have pleaded your cauſe againſt yourſelf in vain, and will Mrs. Wolmar remain ſatisfied with a virtue which depends on opportunity? For my part, I am more nice; I will be indebted for the fidelity of my wife to her affection, not to chance; and it is not enough that ſhe is conſtant, it wounds my delicacy to think that ſhe ſhould doubt her conſtancy."

At length he took us into his cloſet, where I was extremely ſurpriſed to ſee him take from a drawer, along with the copies of ſome of our friend's correſpondences, which I delivered to him, the very original letters which I thought I had ſeen burned by B—— in my mother's room. "Here (ſaid he to me, ſhowing them to us) are the pledges of my ſecurity; if they deceive me, it would be a folly to depend on any thing which concerns human nature. I conſign my wife and my honour in charge to her, who, when ſingle and ſeduced, preferred an act of benevolence to a ſecure and private rendezvous.

dezvous. I truſt Eloiſa, now that ſhe is a wife and a mother, to him who, when he had it in his power to gratify his deſires, yet knew how to reſpect Eloiſa when ſingle, and a fond girl. If either of you think ſo meanly of yourſelves, as to ſuppoſe that I am in the wrong, ſay ſo, and I retract this inſtant." Couſin, do you think that one could eaſily venture to make anſwer to ſuch a ſpeech?

I, nevertheleſs, ſought an opportunity in the afternoon, of ſpeaking with my huſband in private, and without entering into reaſons which I was not at liberty to urge, I only entreated him to put off his journey for two days. My requeſt was granted immediately, and I employ the time in ſending you this expreſs, and waiting for your anſwer, to know how I am to act.

I know that I need but deſire my huſband not to go at all, and he who never denied me any thing will not refuſe me ſo ſlight a favour. But I perceive, my dear, that he takes a pleaſure in the confidence he repoſes in me, and I am afraid of forfeiting ſome ſhare of his eſteem, if he ſhould ſuppoſe that I have occaſion for more reſerve than he allows me. I know, likewiſe, that I need but ſpeak a word to St. Preux, and that he will accompany my huſband without heſitation; but what will my huſband think of the change, and can I take ſuch a ſtep without preſerving an air of authority over St. Preux, which might ſeem to entitle him to ſome pri-

vileges in his turn? Beſides, I am afraid, leſt he ſhould conclude from this precaution that I find it abſolutely neceſſary, and this ſtep, which at firſt ſight appears moſt eaſy, is the moſt dangerous perhaps at the bottom. Upon the whole, however, I am not ignorant that no conſideration ſhould be put in competition with a real danger; but does this danger exiſt in fact? This is the very doubt which you muſt reſolve for me.

The more I examine the preſent ſtate of my mind, the more I find to encourage me. My heart is ſpotleſs, my conſcience calm, I have no ſymptoms of fear or uneaſineſs, and with reſpect to every thing which paſſes within me, my ſincerity before my huſband coſts me no trouble. Not but that certain involuntary recollections ſometimes occaſion tender emotions, from which I had rather be exempt; but theſe recollections are ſo far from being produced by the ſight of him who was the original cauſe of them, that they ſeem to be leſs frequent ſince his return, and however agreeable it is to me to ſee him, yet I know not from what ſtrange humour, it is more agreeable to me to think of him. In a word, I find that I do not even require the aid of virtue, in order to be compoſed in his preſence, and, excluſive of the horrour of guilt, it would be very difficult to revive thoſe ſentiments which virtue has extinguiſhed.

But is it ſufficient, my dear, that my heart encourages me, when reaſon ought to alarm me?

me? I have forfeited the right of depending on my own ſtrength. Who will anſwer that my confidence, even now, is not an illuſion of vice? How ſhall I rely on thoſe ſentiments which have ſo often deceived me? Does not guilt always ſpring from that pride which promps us to deſpiſe temptation; and when we defy thoſe dangers which have occaſioned our fall, does it not ſhow a diſpoſition to yield again to temptation?

Weigh all theſe circumſtances, my dear Clara, you will find that though they may be trifling in themſelves, they are of ſufficient importance to merit attention, when you conſider the object they concern. Deliver me from the uncertainty into which they have thrown me. Show me how I muſt behave in this critical conjuncture; for my paſt errours have affected my judgement, and rendered me diffident in deciding upon any thing. Whatever you may think of yourſelf, your mind, I am certain, is tranquil and compoſed; objects preſent themſelves to you ſuch as they are; but in mine, which is agitated like a troubled ſea, they are confounded and disfigured. I no longer dare to depend upon any thing I ſee, or any thing I feel, and, notwithſtanding ſo many years repentance, I perceive, with concern, that the weight of paſt failings is a burthen we muſt bear to the end of our lives.

LETTER CXXXII.

ANSWER.

POOR Eloiſa! With ſo much reaſon to live at eaſe, what torments you continually create! All thy misfortunes come from thyſelf, O Iſrael! If you adhered to your own maxims; if, in point of ſentiment, you only hearkened to the voice within you, and your heart did but ſilence your reaſon, you would then, without ſcruple, truſt to that ſecurity it inſpires, and you would not conſtrain yourſelf againſt the teſtimony of your own heart, to dread a danger which can ariſe only from thence.

I underſtand you, I perfectly underſtand you, Eloiſa; being more ſecure in yourſelf than you pretend to be, you have a mind to humble yourſelf on account of your paſt failings, under a pretence of preventing new ones; and your ſcruples are not ſo much precautions againſt the future, as a penance you impoſe upon yourſelf, to atone for the indiſcretion which formerly ruined you. You compare the times! do you conſider? Compare ſituations likewiſe, and remember that I then reproved you for your confidence, as I now reprove you for your diffidence.

You are miſtaken, my dear; but nature does not alter ſo ſoon. If we can forget our ſituation for want of reflexion, we ſee it in its true light when we take pains to conſider it, and we can no more conceal from ourſelves our virtues

tues than our vices. Your gentleneſs and devotion have given you a turn for humility. Miſtruſt that dangerous virtue, which only exites ſelf-love, by making it centre in one point, and be aſſured that the noble ſincerity of an upright mind is greatly preferable to the pride of humility. If moderation is neceſſary in wiſdom, it is requiſite, likewiſe, in thoſe precautions it ſuggeſts, leſt a ſollicitude which is reproachful to virtue ſhould debaſe the mind, and, by keeping us in conſtant alarm, render a chimerical danger a real one. Don't you perceive, that after we have had a fall, we ſhould hold ourſelves upright, and that by leaning too much towards the ſide oppoſite to that on which we fell, we are in danger of falling again? Couſin, you loved like Eloiſa. Now, like her, you are an extravagant devotee; I hope you will be more ſucceſsful in the latter than you were in the former! In truth, if I was leſs acquainted with your natural timidity, your apprehenſions would be ſufficient to terrify me in my turn; and if I were ſo ſcrupulous, I might, from being alarmed for you, begin to tremble for myſelf.

Conſider, further, my dear friend; you whoſe ſyſtem of morality is as eaſy and natural as it is pure and honeſt, do not make conſtructions which are harſh and foreign to your character, with reſpect to your maxims concerning the ſeparation of the ſexes. I agree with you that they ought not to live together, nor after the ſame manner; but conſider whether this impor-

tant rule does not admit of many diſtinctions in point of practice; examine whether it ought to be applied indiſcriminately, and without exception, to married as well as to ſingle women, to ſociety in general as well as to particular connexions, to buſineſs as well as to amuſements, and whether that honour and decency which inſpire theſe maxims ought not ſometimes to regulate them? In well-governed countries, where the natural relations of things are attended to in matrimony, you would admit of aſſemblies where young perſons of both ſexes might ſee, be acquainted, and aſſociate with each other; but you prohibit them, with good reaſon, from holding any private intercourſe. But is not the caſe quite different with regard to married women and the mothers of families, who can have no intereſt that is juſtifiable, in exibiting themſelves in publick; who are confined within doors by their domeſtick concerns, and who ſhould not be refuſed to do any thing at home which is becoming the miſtreſs of a family? I ſhould not like to ſee you in the cellars, preſenting the wine for the merchants to taſte, nor to ſee you leave your children to ſettle accounts with a banker; but if an honeſt man ſhould come to viſit your huſband, or to tranſact ſome buſineſs with him, will you refuſe to entertain his gueſt in his abſence, and to do him the honours of the houſe, for fear of being left alone with him? Trace this principle to its ſource, and it will explain all your maxims. Why do we ſuppoſe

that

that women ought to live retired and apart from the men? Shall we do ſuch injuſtice to our ſex, as to account for it upon principles drawn from our weakneſs, and that it is only to avoid the danger of temptations? No, my dear, theſe unworthy apprehenſions do not become an honeſt woman, and the mother of a family, who is continually ſurrounded with objects which cheriſh in her the ſentiments of honour, and who is devoted to the moſt reſpectable duties of human nature. It is nature herſelf that divides us from the men, by preſcribing to us different occupations; it is that amiable and timorous modeſty, which, without being immediately attentive to chaſtity, is nevertheleſs its ſureſt guardian; it is that cautious and affecting reſerve, which at one and the ſame time cheriſhing both deſire and reſpect in the hearts of men, ſerves as a kind of coquetry to virtue. This is the reaſon why even huſbands themſelves are not excepted out of this rule. This is the reaſon why the moſt diſcreet women generally maintain the greateſt aſcendancy over their huſbands; becauſe, by the help of this prudent and diſcreet reſerve, without ſhowing any caprice or non-compliance, they know, even in the embraces of the moſt tender union, how to keep them at a diſtance, and prevent their being cloyed with them. You will agree with me that your maxims are too general not to admit of exceptions, and that not being founded on any rigorous duty, the ſame principle

of decorum which eſtabliſhed them may ſometimes juſtify our diſpenſing with them.

The circumſpection which you ground on your paſt failings is injurious to your preſent condition; I will never pardon this unneceſſary caution which your heart dictates, and I can ſcarce forgive it in your reaſon. How! was it poſſible that the rampart which protects your perſon could not ſecure you from ſuch ignominious apprehenſions? How could my couſin, my ſiſter, my friend, my Eloiſa, confound the indiſcretions of a girl of too much ſenſibility with the infidelity of a guilty wife? Look around you, you will ſee nothing but what contributes to raiſe and ſupport your mind. Your huſband, who has ſuch confidence in you, and whoſe eſteem it becomes you to juſtify; your children, whom you would train to virtue, and who will one day deem it an honour that you was their mother; your venerable father, who is ſo dear to you, who enjoys your felicity, and who derives more luſtre from you than from his anceſtors; your friend, whoſe fate depends on your's, and to whom you muſt be accountable for a reformation to which ſhe has contributed; her daughter, to whom you ought to ſet an example of thoſe virtues which you would excite in her; your philoſopher, who is an hundred times fonder of your virtues than of your perſon, and who reſpects you ſtill more than you apprehend; laſtly, yourſelf, who are ſenſible what painful efforts your diſcretion has coſt you, and who will ſurely never

never forfeit the fruit of ſo much trouble in a ſingle moment; how many motives capable of inſpiring you with courage conſpire to make you aſhamed of having ventured to miſtruſt yourſelf! But, in order to anſwer for my Eloiſa, what occaſion have I to conſider what ſhe is? It is enough that I know what ſhe was, during the indiſcretions which ſhe bewails. Ah! if your heart had ever been capable of infidelity, I would allow you to be continually apprehenſive: but at the very time when you imagined that you viewed it a diſtance, you may conceive the horrour its real exiſtence would have occaſioned you, by what you felt at that time, when but to imagine it had been to have committed it.

I recollect with what aſtoniſhment we learnt that there was a nation where the weakneſs of a fond maid is conſidered as an inexpiable crime, though the adultery of a married woman is there ſoftened by the gentle term of gallantry, and where married women publickly make themſelves amends for the ſhort-lived reſtraint they undergo when ſingle. I know what maxims, in this reſpect, prevail in high life, where virtue paſſes for nothing, where every thing is empty appearance, where crimes are effaced by the difficulty of proving them, or where the proof itſelf becomes ridiculous againſt cuſtom. But you, Eloiſa, you who glowed with a pure and conſtant paſſion, who was guilty only in the eyes of men, and between heaven and earth was open to no reproach! You, who

made yourſelf reſpected in the midſt of your indiſcretions; you, who being abandoned to fruitleſs regret, obliged us even to adore thoſe virtues which you had forfeited; you, who diſdained to endure ſelf-contempt, when every thing ſeemed to plead in your excuſe, can you be apprehenſive of guilt, after having paid ſo dearly for your weakneſs? Will you dare to be afraid that you have leſs power now than you had in thoſe days which coſt you ſo many tears? No, my dear, ſo far from being alarmed at your former indiſcretions, they ought to inſpire you with courage; ſo ſevere a repentance does not lead to remorſe, and whoever is ſo ſuſceptible of ſhame will never bid defiance to infamy.

If ever a weak mind had ſupports againſt its weakneſs, they are ſuch as uphold you; if ever a vigorous mind was capable of ſupporting itſelf, what prop can your's require? Tell me, what reaſonable grounds there can be for your apprehenſions? All your life has been a continual ſtruggle, in which, even after your defeat, honour and duty never ceaſed oppoſition, and at length came off victorious. Ah! Eloiſa! ſhall I believe that, after ſo much pain and torment, after twelve years paſſed in tears, and ſix ſpent glorioufly, that you ſtill dread a tryal of eight days? In few words, deal ſincerely with yourſelf; if there be really any danger, ſave your perſon, and bluſh at the condition of your heart; if there is no danger, it is an offenſe to your reaſon, it is a diſhonour to your virtue to

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be apprehenſive of perils, which can never affect it. Do you not know that there are ſome ſcandalous temptations which never approach noble minds; that it is even ſhameful to be under a neceſſity of ſubduing them, and that to take precautious againſt them, is not ſo much to humble, as to debaſe ourſelves?

I do not preſume to give you my arguments as unanſwerable, but only to convince you that your's may be controverted, and that is ſufficient to warrant my advice. Do not depend on yourſelf, for you do not know how to do yourſelf juſtice; nor on me, who, even in your indiſcretions never conſidered any thing but your heart, and always adored you; but refer to your huſband, who ſees you ſuch as you are, and judges of you exactly according to your real worth. Being, like all people of ſenſibility, ready to judge ill of thoſe who appear inſenſible, I miſtruſted his power of penetration into the ſecrets of ſuſceptible minds, but ſince the arrival of our traveller, I find by his letters that he reads your's perfectly well, and that there is not a ſingle emotion which eſcapes his obſervation. I find his remarks ſo juſt and acute, that I have almoſt changed my opinion to the other extreme; and I ſhall readily believe that your diſpaſſionate people, who conſult their eyes more than their hearts, judge better of other men's paſſions than your impetuous, lively, and vain perſons like myſelf, who always begin by ſuppoſing themſelves in another's place, and can

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never ſee any thing but what they feel. However it be, Mr. Wolmar is thoroughly acquainted with you, he eſteems you, he loves you, and his deſtiny is blended with your's. What does he require, but that you would leave to him the entire direction of your conduct, with which you are afraid to truſt yourſelf? Perhaps, finding old age coming on, he is deſirous, by ſome tryals on which he may depend, to prevent thoſe uneaſy jealouſies, which an old huſband generally feels who is married to a young wife; perhaps the deſign he has in view requires that you ſhould live in a ſtate of familiarity with your friend, without alarming either your huſband or yourſelf; perhaps he only means to give you a teſtimony of confidence and eſteem, worthy of that which he entertains for you. You ſhould never oppoſe ſuch ſentiments, as if the weight of them was too much for you to endure; and for my part, I think that you cannot act more agreeably to the dictates of prudence and modeſty, than by relying entirely on his tenderneſs and underſtanding.

Could you, without offending Mr. Wolmar, puniſh yourſelf for a vanity you never had, and prevent a danger which no longer exiſts? Remain alone with the philoſopher, uſe all the ſuperfluous precautions againſt him which would formely have been of ſuch ſervice to you; maintain the ſame reſerve as if you ſtill miſtruſted your own heart and his, as well as your own virtue. Avoid all pathetick converſation,

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all tender recollection of times paſt; break off or prevent long private interviews; be conſtantly ſurrounded by your children; do not ſtay long with him in a room, in Elyſium, or in the grove, notwithſtanding the profanation. Above all things, uſe theſe precautions in ſo natural a manner, that they may ſeem to be the effect of chance, and that he may never once ſuſpect that you are afraid of him. You love to go upon the water, but you deprive yourſelf of the pleaſure, on account of your huſband, who is afraid of that element, and of your children, whom you do not chooſe to venture there. Take the advantage of this abſence, to entertain yourſelf with this recreation, and leave your children to the care of Fanny. By this means you may ſecurely devote yourſelf to the ſweet familiarity of friendſhip, and quietly enjoy a long *tête-à-tête* under the protection of the watermen, who ſee without underſtanding, and from whom we cannot go far without thinking what we are about.

A thought ſtrikes me which many people would laugh at, but which will be agreeable to you, I am ſure; that is, to keep an exact journal in your huſband's abſence, to ſhow him on his return, and to think on this journal, with regard to every circumſtance which is to be ſet down in it. In truth, I do not believe that ſuch an expedient would be of ſervice to many women; but a ſincere mind, incapable of deceit, has many reſources againſt vice, which others

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ſtand in need of. We ought to deſpiſe nothing which tends to preſerve a purity of manners, and it is by means of trifling precautions, that great virtues are ſecured.

Upon the whole, as your huſband is to ſee me in his way, he will tell me, I hope, the true reaſons of his journey, and if I do not find them ſubſtantial, I will diſſuade him from proceeding any farther; or, at all events, I will do what he has refuſed to do: upon this you may depend. In the mean time, I think I have ſaid enough to fortify you againſt a tryal of eight days. Go, Eloiſa, I know you too well, not to anſwer for you as much, nay more than I could for myſelf. You will always be what you ought to be, and what you deſire to be. If you do but rely on the integrity of your own mind, you will run no riſk whatever; for I have no faith in theſe unforeſeen defects; it is in vain to diſguiſe voluntary failings by the idle appellation of weakneſſes; no woman was ever yet overcome who had not an inclination to ſurrender; and if I thought that ſuch a fate could attend you, believe me, truſt to the tenderneſs of my friendſhip, rely on all the ſentiments which would ariſe in the heart of your poor Clara, I ſhould be too ſenſibly intereſted in your protection, to abandon you entirely to yourſelf.

As to what Mr. Wolmar declared to you, concerning the intelligence he received before your marriage, I am not much ſurpriſed at it; you know I always ſuſpected it; and I will tell you,

you, moreover, that my ſuſpicions are not confined to the indiſcretions of B——. I could never ſuppoſe that a man of truth and integrity like your father, and who had ſome ſuſpicions at leaſt himſelf, would reſolve to impoſe upon his ſon-in-law and his friend. If he engaged you ſo ſtrictly to ſecreſy, it was becauſe the mode of diſcovery would come to him in a very different manner to what it would have proceeded from you; and becauſe he was willing, no doubt, to give it a turn leſs likely to diſguſt Mr. Wolmar, than that which he very well knew you would not fail to give it yourſelf. But I muſt diſmiſs your meſſenger, we will chat about theſe matters more at our leiſure about a month hence.

Farewell, my deareſt couſin, I have preached long enough to the preacher; reſume your old occupation———I find myſelf quite uneaſy that I cannot be with you yet. I diſorder all my affairs, by hurrying to deſpatch them, and I ſcarce know what to do. Ah, Chaillot, Chaillot . . . If I was leſs giddy . . . but I always hope that I ſhall——

P. S.—A-propos; I forgot to make my compliments to your highneſs. Tell me, I beſeech you, is the gentleman your huſband Atteman, Knes, or Boyard*? O poor child! You, who have ſo often lamented being born a gentlewoman,

* Mrs. Orbe was ignorant, however, that the firſt two names are titles of diſtinction, in Ruſſia; but Boyard is only that of a private gentleman.

man, are very fortunate to become the wife of a prince! Between ourſelves, nevertheleſs, you diſcover apprehenſions which are ſomewhat vulgar for a woman of ſuch high quality. Do not you know, that little ſcruples belong to mean people; and that a child of a good family, who ſhould pretend to be his father's ſon, would be laughed at?

LETTER CXXXIII.

MR. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

I AM going to Etange, my ſweet couſin, and I propoſed to call upon you in my way; but a delay, of which you are the cauſe, obliges me to make more haſte, and I had rather lie at Lauſanne as I come back, that I may paſs a few hours the more with you. Beſides, I want to conſult you with regard to many particulars, which it is proper to communicate beforehand, that you may have time to conſider them before you give me your opinion.

I would not explain my ſcheme to you in relation to the young man, till his preſence had confirmed the good opinion I had conceived of him. I think I may now depend upon him ſufficiently to acquaint you, between ourſelves, that my deſign is to entruſt him with the education of my children. I am not ignorant that theſe important concerns are the principal duty of a parent; but when it will be time to exert them,

them, I ſhall be too old to diſcharge them, and being naturally calm and ſpeculative by conſtitution, I ſhould never have been ſufficiently active to govern the ſpirit of youth. Beſides, for a reaſon you know*, Eloiſa would be concerned to ſee me aſſume an office, in which I ſhould never acquit myſelf to her liking. I have a thouſand reaſons beſides; your ſex is not equal to theſe duties; their mother ſhall confine herſelf to the education of her Harriet; to your ſhare I allot the management of the houſehold upon the plan already eſtabliſhed, and of which you approve; and it ſhall be my buſineſs to behold three worthy people concurring to promote the happineſs of the family, and to enjoy that repoſe in my old age, for which I ſhall be indebted to their labours.

I have always found, that my wife was extremely averſe from truſting her children to the care of mercenaries, and I could not diſcommend her ſcruples. The reſpectable capacity of a preceptor requires ſo many talents which are not to be paid for, ſo many virtues which have no price ſet upon them, that it is in vain to think of procuring one by means of money. It is from a man of genius only that we can expect the talents of a preceptor; it is from the heart of an affectionate friend alone that we can hope to meet with the zeal of a parent; and genius is not to be ſold any more than attachment.

All the requiſite qualities ſeem to be united in your friend; and if I am well acquainted with

* The reader is not yet acquainted with this reaſon; but he is deſired not to be impatient.

with his diſpoſition, I do not think he would deſire greater happineſs, than to make thoſe beloved children contribute to their mother's felicity. The only obſtacle I can foreſee is his affection to Lord B——, which will not allow him to diſengage himſelf from ſo dear a friend, to whom he has ſuch great obligations, at leaſt, if his lordſhip does not require it himſelf. We expect to ſee this extraordinary man very ſoon: and as you have a great aſcendancy over him, if he anſwers the idea you have given me of him, I may commit the buſineſs, ſo far as it relates to him, to your management.

You have now, my dear couſin, the clue of my whole conduct, which, without this explanation, muſt have appeared very extraordinary, and which, I hope, will hereafter meet with Eloiſa's approbation and your's. The advantage of having ſuch a wife as I have made me try many expedients which would have been impracticable with another. Though I leave her, in full confidence, with her old lover, under no other guard than her own virtue, it would be madneſs to eſtabliſh that lover in my family, before I was certain that he ceaſed to be ſuch; and how could I be aſſured of it, if I had a wife on whom I had leſs dependence?

I have often obſerved you ſmile at my remarks on love; but now I think I can mortify you. I have made a diſcovery which neither you or any other woman, with all the ſubtlety

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they attribute to your ſex, would ever have made; the proof of which you will nevertheleſs perceive at firſt ſight, and you will allow it to be equal to demonſtration, when I explain to you the principles on which I ground it. Was I to tell you that my young couple are more fond than ever, this undoubtedly would not appear wonderful to you. Was I to aſſure you, on the contrary, that they are perfectly cured; you know the power of reaſon and virtue, and therefore you would not look upon that neither as a great miracle: but if I tell you, that both theſe oppoſites are true at the ſame time; that they love each other with more ardour than ever, and that nothing ſubſiſts between them but a virtuous attachment; that they are always lovers, and yet never more than friends: this, I imagine, is what you would leaſt expect, what you will have more difficulty to conceive, and what nevertheleſs preciſely correſponds with truth.

This is the riddle, which makes thoſe frequent contradictions, which you muſt have obſerved in them, both in their converſation and in their letters. What you wrote to Eloiſa concerning the picture has ſerved more than any thing to explain the myſtery, and I find that they are always ſincere, even in contradicting themſelves continually. When I ſay they, I ſpeak particularly of the young man; for as to your friend, one can only ſpeak of her by conjecture. A veil of wiſdom and

honour

honour makes ſo many folds about her heart, that it is impenetrable to human eyes, even to her own. The only circumſtance which leads me to imagine that ſhe has ſtill ſome diſtruſt to overcome is, that ſhe is continually conſidering with herſelf what ſhe ſhould do if ſhe was perfectly cured; and ſhe examines herſelf with ſo much accuracy, that if ſhe was really cured, ſhe would not do it ſo well.

As to your friend, who, though virtuouſly inclined, is leſs apprehenſive of his preſent feelings, I find that he ſtill retains all the affections of his youth; but I perceive them, without having any reaſon to be offended at them. It is not Eloiſa Wolmar he is fond of, but Eloiſa Etange; he does not hate me as the poſſeſſor of the object I love, but as the raviſher of her whom he doated on. His friend's wife is not his miſtreſs, the mother of two children is not her who was formerly his ſcholar. It is true, ſhe is very like that perſon, and often puts him in mind of her. He loves her in the time paſt. This is the true explanation of the riddle. Deprive him of his memory, and you deſtroy his love.

This is not an idle ſubtlety, my pretty couſin, but a ſolid obſervation, which, if extended to other affections, may admit of a more general application than one would imagine. I even think that it would not be difficult to explain it by your ideas. At the time you parted the two lovers, their paſſion was at the higheſt

higheſt degree of impetuoſity. Perhaps, if they had continued much longer together, they would gradually have grown cool; but their imagination, being ſtrongly affected, conſtantly preſented each to the other in the light in which they appeared at the time of their ſeparation. The young man, not perceiving thoſe alterations which the progreſs of time made in his miſtreſs, loved her ſuch as he had ſeen her formerly, not ſuch as ſhe was then*. To complete his happineſs, it would not have been enough to have given him poſſeſſion of her, unleſs ſhe could have been given to him at the ſame age, and under the ſame circumſtances ſhe was in, when their loves commenced. The leaſt alteration in theſe particulars would have leſſened ſo much of the felicity he propoſed to himſelf; ſhe is grown handſomer, but ſhe is altered; her improvement, in that ſenſe, turns to her prejudice; for it is of his former miſtreſs, not of any other, that he is enamoured.

What

* You women are very ridiculous to think of rendering ſuch a frivolous and fluctuating paſſion as that of love conſiſtent. Every thing in nature is changeable, every thing is continually fluctuating, and yet you would inſpire a conſtant paſſion! And what right have you to pretend that we muſt love you for ever, becauſe we loved you yeſterday? Then preſerve the ſame face, the ſame age, the ſame humour; be always the ſame, and we will always love you, if we can. But when you alter continually, and require us always to love you, it is, in fact, deſiring us every minute not to love you; it is not ſeeking for conſtant minds, but looking out for ſuch as are as fickle as your own.

What deceives him, is, that he confounds the times, and often reproaches himſelf on account of a paſſion which he thinks preſent, and which, in fact, is nothing more than the effect of too tender a recollection; but I do not know, whether it will not be better to accompliſh his cure, than to undeceive him. Perhaps, in this reſpect we may reap more advantage from his miſtake, than from his better judgement. To diſcover to him the true ſtate of his affections, would be to appriſe him of the death of the object he loved; this might be an affliction dangerous to him, inaſmuch as a ſtate of melancholy is always favourable to love.

Freed from the ſcruples which reſtrain him, he would probably be more inclined to indulge recollections which he ought to ſtifle; he would converſe with leſs reſerve, and the traces of Eloiſa are not ſo effaced in Mrs. Wolmar, but upon examination he might find them again. I have thought, that, inſtead of undeceiving him with reſpect to his opinion of the progreſs he has made, and which encourages him to purſue it to the end, we ſhould rather endeavour to baniſh the rememberance of thoſe times which he ought to forget, by ſkilfully ſubſtituting other ideas in the room of thoſe he is ſo fond of. You, who contribute to give them birth, may contribute more than any one to efface them: but I ſhall wait till we are all together, that I may tell you in your ear what you ſhould do for this

this purpoſe; a charge, which, if I am not miſtaken, will not be very burthenſome to me. In the mean time, I endeavour to make the objects of his dread familiar to him, by preſenting them to him in ſuch a manner, that he may no longer think them dangerous. He is impetuous, but tractable, and eaſily managed. I avail myſelf of this advantage to give a turn to his imagination. In the room of his miſtreſs, I compel him always to look at the wife of his friend, and the mother of my children; I efface one picture by another, and hide the paſt with the preſent. We always ride a ſtartliſh horſe up to the object which frights him, that he may not be frightened at it again. We ſhould act in the ſame manner with thoſe young people, whoſe imaginations are on fire even after their affections are grown cold, and whoſe fancy preſents monſters at a diſtance, which diſappear as they draw near.

I think I am well acquainted with the ſtrength of both, and I do not expoſe them to a tryal which they cannot ſupport: for wiſdom does not conſiſt in uſing all kinds of precautions indiſcriminately, but in chooſing thoſe which are really uſeful, and in neglecting ſuch as are ſuperfluous. The eight days during which I leave them together will perhaps be ſufficient for them to diſcover the true ſtate of their minds, and to know in what relation they really ſtand to each other. The oftener they perceive themſelves in private with each other, the ſooner they will find

out their miſtake, by comparing their preſent ſenſations with thoſe they felt formerly, when they were in the ſame ſituation. Beſides, it is of importance that they ſhould uſe themſelves to endure, without danger, that ſtate of familiarity in which they muſt neceſſarily live together, if my ſcheme takes place. I find by Eloiſa's conduct, that you have given her advice, which ſhe could not refuſe taking, without wronging herſelf. What pleaſure I ſhould take in giving her this proof that I am ſenſible of her real worth, if ſhe was a woman with whom a huſband might make a merit of ſuch confidence! But, if ſhe gains nothing over her affections, her virtue will ſtill be the ſame; it will coſt her dearer, and ſhe will not triumph the leſs. Whereas, if ſhe is ſtill in danger of feeling any inward uneaſineſs, it can ariſe only from ſome moving converſation, which ſhe muſt be too ſenſible before-hand will awaken recollection, and which ſhe will therefore always avoid. Thus, you ſee, you muſt not in this inſtance judge of my conduct by common maxims, but from the motives which actuate me, and from the ſingular diſpoſition of her towards whom I ſhall regulate my behaviour.

Farewell, my dear couſin, till my return. Though I have not entered into theſe explanations with Eloiſa, I do not deſire you to keep them ſecret from her. It is a maxim with me, never to make ſecrets among my friends; therefore, I commit theſe to your diſcretion; make ſuch uſe of them as your prudence and friend-

ſhip

ſhip will direct. I know you will do nothing, but what is beſt, and moſt proper.

LETTER CXXXIV.

TO LORD B——.

MR. Wolmar ſet out yeſterday for Etange, and you can ſcarce conceive in what a melancholy ſtate his departure has left me. I think the abſence of his wife would not have affected me ſo much as his. I find myſelf under greater reſtraint than even when he is preſent; a mournful ſilence takes poſſeſſion of my heart; its murmurs are ſtifled by a ſecret dread: and, being leſs tormented with deſires than apprehenſions, I experience all the horrours of guilt, without being expoſed to the temptations of it.

Can you imagine, my lord, where my mind gains confidence, and loſes theſe unworthy dreads? In the preſence of Mrs. Wolmar. As ſoon as I approach her, the ſight of her pacifies my inquietude; her looks purify my heart. Such is the aſcendancy of her's, that it always ſeems to inſpire others with a ſenſe of her innocence, and to confer that compoſure which is the effect of it. Unluckily for me, her ſyſtem of life does not allow her to devote the whole day to the ſociety of her friends; and in thoſe moments which I am obliged to paſs out of her company, I ſhould ſuffer leſs, if I was farther diſtant from her.

What contributes to feed the melancholy which oppreſſes me, is a reflexion which ſhe made yeſterday, after her huſband's departure. Though till that moment ſhe kept up her ſpirits tolerably, yet for a long time her eyes followed him with an air of tenderneſs, which I then imagined was only occaſioned by the departure of that happy huſband; but I found by her converſation, that the emotion was to be imputed to another cauſe, which was a ſecret to me. "You ſee (ſaid ſhe) in what manner we live together, and you may judge whether he is dear to me. Do not imagine, however, that the ſentiment which attaches me to him, though as tender and as powerful as that of love, is likewiſe ſuſceptible of its weakneſs. If an interruption of the agreeable habit of living together is painful to us, we are conſoled by the firm hope of reſuming the ſame habit again. A ſtate of ſuch permanence admits few viciſſitudes which we have reaſon to dread; and in an abſence of a few days, the pain of ſo ſhort an interval does not affect me ſo ſtrongly as the pleaſure of ſeeing an end to it. The affliction which you read in my eyes proceeds from a more weighty cauſe, and though it is relative to Mr. Wolmar, it is not occaſioned by his departure.

"My dear friend (continued ſhe, with an affecting tone) there is no true happineſs on earth. My huſband is one of the moſt worthy and affectionate of men; the duty which incites us is cemented by mutual inclination; he has no

deſires

deſires but mine; I have children which give, and promiſe pleaſure hereafter to their mother; there cannot be a more affectionate, virtuous, and amiable friend than her whom my heart doats on, and with whom I ſhall paſs my days; you yourſelf contribute to my felicity, by having ſo well juſtified my eſteem and affection for you; a long and expenſive law-ſuit, which is nearly finiſhed, will ſoon bring the beſt of fathers to my arms; every thing proſpers with us; peace and order reign throughout the family; our ſervants are zealous and faithful; our neighbours expreſs every kind of attachment to us; we enjoy the good-will of the publick. Bleſt with every thing which heaven, fortune, and men can beſtow, all things conſpire to my happineſs. A ſecret uneaſineſs, one trouble only, poiſons all, and I am not happy." She uttered theſe laſt words with a ſigh which pierced my ſoul, and which I had no ſhare in raiſing. She is not happy, ſaid I, ſighing in my turn, and I am no longer an obſtacle to her felicity!

That melancholy thought diſordered my ideas in a moment, and diſturbed the repoſe which I began to taſte. Unable to endure the intolerable ſtate of doubt into which her converſation had thrown me, I importuned her ſo eagerly to diſcloſe her whole mind to me, that at length ſhe depoſited the fatal ſecret with me, and allows me to communicate it to you. But this is the hour of recreation; Mrs. Wolmar is come out of the nurſery, to walk with her children; ſhe has juſt

told me as much. I attend her, my lord—I leave you for the preſent; and ſhall reſume in my next the ſubject I am now obliged to quit.

LETTER CXXXV.

MRS. WOLMAR TO HER HUSBAND.

I Expect you next Tueſday, according to your appointment, and you will find every thing diſpoſed agreeably to your deſire. Call on Mrs. Orbe in your way back; ſhe will tell you what has paſſed during your abſence; I had rather you ſhould learn it from her than from me.

I thought, Mr. Wolmar, I had deſerved your eſteem; but your conduct is not the moſt prudent, and you ſport moſt cruelly with your wife's virtue.

LETTER CXXXVI.

TO LORD B——.

I Muſt give you an account, my lord, of a danger we have incurred within theſe few days, and from whence we are happily delivered at the expenſe of a little terrour and fatigue. This relation very well deſerves a letter by itſelf; when you read it, you will perceive the motives which engage me to write.

You know that Mrs. Wolmar's houſe is not far from the lake, and that ſhe is fond of the water. It is three days ſince her huſband's abſence

ſence has left us without employment; and the pleaſantneſs of the evening made us form a ſcheme for one of theſe parties the next day. Soon as the ſun was up we went to the river's ſide; we took a boat, with nets for fiſhing, three rowers, and a ſervant, and we embarked with ſome proviſions for dinner. I took a fowling-piece, to knock down ſome peſolets*, but was aſhamed to kill birds out of wantonneſs, and only for the pleaſure of doing miſchief. I amuſed myſelf, therefore, in obſerving the fiſhets, the crenets†, and I fired but once at a grebe, at a great diſtance, which I miſſed.

We paſſed an hour or two in fiſhing within 500 paces of the ſhore. We had good ſucceſs, but Eloiſa had them all thrown into the water again, except a trout, which had received a blow from the oar. "The animals (ſaid ſhe) are in pain; let us deliver them; let us enjoy the pleaſure they will feel on eſcaping from danger." This operation, however, was performed ſlowly, and againſt the grain, not without ſome repreſentations againſt it; and I found that our gentry would have had a much better reliſh for the fiſh they had catched, than for the moral which ſaved their lives.

We then launched farther into the lake; ſoon after, with all the vivacity of a young man,

* A bird of paſſage on the lake of Geneva, which is not good to eat.

† Different ſorts of birds on the lake of Geneva, and very good to eat.

which it is time for me to check, undertaking to manage the maſter oar, I rowed the boat into the middle of the lake, ſo that we were ſoon above a league from ſhore. Then I explained to Eloiſa every part of that ſuperb horizon which environed us. I ſhowed her at a diſtance the mouth of the Rhone, whoſe impetuous current ſtops on a ſudden within a quarter of a league, as if it was afraid to ſully the cryſtal azure of the lake with its muddy waters. I made her obſerve the redans of the mountains, whoſe correſpondent angles running parallel, formed a bed in the ſpace between, fit to receive the river which occupied it. As we got farther from ſhore, I had great pleaſure in making her take notice of the rich and delightful banks of the *Pays de Vaud*, where the vaſt number of towns, the prodigious throng of people, with the beautiful and verdant hills all around, formed a moſt raviſhing landſcape; where every ſpot of ground, being cultivated and equally fertile, ſupplies the huſbandman, the ſhepherd, and the vine-dreſſer with the certain fruits of their labours, which are not devoured by the greedy publican. Afterwards I pointed out *Chablais*, a country not leſs favoured by nature, and which nevertheleſs affords nothing but a ſpectacle of wretchedneſs; I made her perceive the manifeſt diſtinction between the different effects of the two governments, with reſpect to the riches, number, and happineſs of the inhabitants. "It is thus, (ſaid I) that the earth expands her fruitful boſom,

ſom, and laviſhes treaſures among thoſe happy people who cultivate it for themſelves. She ſeems to ſmile and be enlivened at the ſweet aſpect of liberty; ſhe loves to nouriſh mankind. On the contrary; the mournful ruins, the heath and brambles which cover a half deſert country, proclaim from afar that it is under the dominion of an abſent proprietor, and that it yields with reluctance a ſcanty produce to ſlaves who reap no advantage from it.

While we were agreeably amuſing ourſelves with viewing the neighbouring coaſts, a gale ariſing, which drove us aſlant towards the oppoſite ſhore, began to blow very high, and when we thought to tack about, the reſiſtance was ſo ſtrong, that it was impoſſible for our ſlight boat to overcome it. The waves ſoon began to grow dreadful; we endeavoured to make for the coaſt of Savoy, and tried to land at the village of Meillerie, which was over againſt us, and the only place almoſt where the ſhore affords a convenient landing. But the wind changing, and blowing ſtronger, rendered all the endeavours of the watermen ineffectual, and diſcovered to us a range of ſteep rocks, ſomewhat lower, where there was no ſhelter,

We all tugged at our oars, and at that inſtant I had the mortification to perceive Eloiſa grow ſick, and ſee her weak and fainting at the bottom of the boat. Happily, ſhe had been uſed to the water, and her ſickneſs did not laſt long. In the mean time our efforts increaſed with our

danger; the heat of the ſun, the fatigue, and profuſe ſweating, took away our breaths, and made us exceſſively faint. Then, ſummoning all her courage, Eloiſa revived our ſpirits by her compaſſionate kindneſs; ſhe wiped the ſweat from off our faces; and mixing ſome wine and water, for fear of intoxication, ſhe preſented it alternately to thoſe who were moſt exhauſted. No, your lovely friend never appeared with ſuch luſtre as at that moment, when the heat and agitation of her ſpirits gave an additional glow to her complexion; and what greatly improved her charms, was, that you might plainly perceive, by the tenderneſs of her behaviour, that her ſolliciſtude proceeded leſs from apprehenſions for herſelf than compaſſion for us. At one time two planks having ſtarted by a ſhock which dipped us all, ſhe concluded that the boat was ſplit, and in the exclamation of that affectionate mother, I heard theſe words diſtinctly: "O my children, muſt I never ſee you more!" As for myſelf, whoſe imagination always exceeds the danger, though I knew the utmoſt of our perilous condition, yet I expected every minute to ſee the boat ſwallowed up, that delicate beauty ſtruggling in the midſt of the waves, and the roſes upon her cheeks chilled by the cold hand of death.

At length, by dint of labour, we reached Meillerie; and after having ſtruggled above an hour within ten paces of the ſhore, we at laſt effected a landing. Which done, all our fatigues were forgotten. Eloiſa took upon herſelf

to

to recompenſe the trouble which every one had taken; and as in the height of danger her concern was for us, ſhe ſeemed now on ſhore to imagine that we had ſaved nobody but her.

We dined with that appetite which is the gift of hard labour. The trout was ſerved up: Eloiſa, who was extremely fond of it, eat but little; and I perceived, that, to make the watermen amends for the regret which the late ſacrifice coſt them, ſhe did not chooſe that I ſhould eat much myſelf. My lord, you have obſerved a thouſand times that her amiable diſpoſition is to be ſeen in trifles as well as in matters of conſequence.

After dinner, the water being ſtill rough, and the boat wanting to be refitted, I propoſed taking a walk. Eloiſa objected to the wind and ſun, and took notice of my being fatigued. I had my views, and obviated all her objections. "I have been accuſtomed (ſaid I) to violent exerciſes from my infancy: far from hurting my health, they ſtrengthen my conſtitution; and my late voyage has ſtill made me more robuſt. As to the ſun and wind, you have your ſtraw hat, and we will get under the wind, and in the woods; we need only clime among the rocks, and you, who are not fond of a flat, will willingly bear the fatigue." She conſented, and we ſet out while our people were at dinner.

You know, that when I was baniſhed from Valais, I came about ten years ago to Meillerie, to wait for leave to return. It was there I

paſſed thoſe melancholy but pleaſing days, ſolely intent upon her; and it was from thence I wrote her that letter, with which ſhe was ſo greatly affected. I always wiſhed to reviſit that lovely retreat, which ſerved me as an aſylum in the midſt of ice, and where my heart loved to converſe, in idea, with the object of all others moſt dear to its affections. An opportunity of viſiting this beloved ſpot in a more agreeable ſeaſon, and in company with her whoſe image formerly dwelt there with me, was the ſecret motive of my walk. I took a pleaſure in pointing out to her thoſe old memorials of ſuch a conſtant and unfortunate paſſion.

We got there after an hour's walk through cool and winding paths, which aſcending inſenſibly between the trees and the rocks, were no otherwiſe inconvenient than by being tedious. As we drew near, and I recollected former tokens, I found myſelf a little diſordered; but I overcame it; I concealed my uneaſineſs, and we reached the place. This ſolitary ſpot formed a wild and deſert nook, but full of thoſe ſorts of beauties which are only agreeable to ſuſceptible minds, and appear horrible to others. A torrent, occaſioned by the melting of the ſnow, rolled in a muddy ſtream within twenty paces of us, and carried dirt, ſand, and ſtones along with it, not without conſiderable noiſe. Behind us, a chain of inacceſſible rocks divided the place where we ſtood from that part of the Alps which they call the ice-houſes, becauſe, from the beginning

beginning of the world they have been covered with vaſt mountains of ice, which are continually increaſing*. Foreſts of gloomy fir-trees afforded us a melancholy ſhade on the right. On the left was a large wood of oak, beyond which the torrent iſſued, and beneath that vaſt body of water which the lake forms in the bay of the Alps, parted us from the rich coaſt of the *Pays de Vaud*, crowning the whole landſcape with the top of the majeſtick Jura.

In the midſt of thoſe noble and ſuperb objects, the little ſpot where we were diſplayed all the charms of an agreeable and rural retreat; ſmall floods of water filtered through the rocks, and flowed along the verdure in cryſtal ſtreams. Some wild fruit-trees leaned their heads over our's; the cool and moiſt earth was covered with graſs and flowers. Comparing this agreeable retreat with the objects which ſurrounded us, one would have thought that this deſert ſpot was deſigned as an aſylum for two lovers, who alone had eſcaped the general wreck of nature.

When we had reached this corner, and I had attentively examined it for ſome time, "Now (ſaid I to Eloiſa, looking at her with eyes ſwimming in tears) is your heart perfectly ſtill in this place, and do you feel no ſecret emotion at the ſight of a ſpot which is full of you?" Immediately

* Theſe mountains are ſo high, that half an hour after ſun-ſet its rays ſtill gild the tops of them, and the reflexion of red on thoſe white ſummits forms a beautiful roſeate colour, which may be perceived at a great diſtance.

ately, without waiting for her anſwer, I led her towards the rock, and ſhowed her where her cypher was engraved in a thouſand places, with ſeveral verſes in Petrarch and Taſſo relative to the ſtate I was in when I engraved them. On ſeeing them again at ſuch a diſtance of time, I found how powerfully the review of theſe objects renewed my former violent ſenſations. I addreſſed her with ſome degree of impetuoſity: "O Eloiſa, the everlaſting delight of my ſoul! this is the ſpot, where the moſt conſtant lover in the world formerly ſighed for thee. This is the retreat, where thy beloved image made all the ſcene of his felicity, and prepared him for that happineſs which you yourſelf afterwards diſpenſed. No fruit or ſhade were then to be found here: theſe compartments were not then furniſhed with verdure or flowers; the courſe of theſe ſtreams did not then make theſe ſeparations; theſe birds did not chirp then, the voracious ſparhawk, the diſmal crow, and the dreadful eagle alone made theſe caverns echo with their cries; huge lumps of ice hung from theſe rocks; feſtoons of ſnow were all the ornaments which bedecked theſe trees: every thing here bore marks of the rigour of winter and hoary froſt; the ardour of my affection alone made this place ſupportable, and I ſpent whole days here, wrapt in thought of thee. Here is the ſtone where I uſed to ſit, to reflect on your happy abode at a diſtance; on this I penned that letter which moved your heart; theſe ſharp flints ſerved me as graving

ing tools to cut out your name; here I croſſed that frozen torrent, to regain one of your letters which the wind had carried off; there I came to review, and give a thouſand kiſſes to the laſt you ever wrote to me; this is the brink where, with a gloomy and greedy eye, I meaſured the depth of this abyſs: in ſhort, it was here that, before my ſad departure, I came to bewail you as dead, and ſwore never to ſurvive you. Oh! thou lovely fair one, too conſtantly adored, thou for whom alone I was born! muſt I reviſit this ſpot with you by my ſide, and muſt I regret the time I ſpent here in bewailing your abſence? . . . ." I was proceeding farther; but Eloiſa perceiving me draw near the brink was affrighted, and ſeiſing my hand, preſſed it, without ſpeaking a word, looked tenderly upon me, and could ſcarce ſuppreſs a riſing ſigh; ſoon after, turning from me, and taking me by the arm, "Let us be gone, my friend (ſaid ſhe, with a tone of emotion) the air of this place is not good for me." I went with her ſighing, but without making her any anſwer; and I quitted that melancholy ſpot for ever, with as much regret as I would have taken leave of Eloiſa herſelf.

We came back gently to the harbour, after ſome little wandering, and parted. She choſe to be alone, and I continued walking, without knowing whither I went. At my return, the boat not being yet ready, nor the water ſmooth, we made a melancholy ſupper, with down-caſt eyes,

eyes, and penſive looks, eating little, and talking ſtill leſs. After ſupper, we ſat on the ſtrand, waiting an opportunity to go off. The moon ſhone on a ſudden, the water became ſmoother, and Eloiſa propoſed our departure. I handed her into the boat, and when I ſat down by her, I never thought of quitting her hand. We kept a profound ſilence. The equal and meaſured ſound of the oars threw me into a reverie. The lively chirping of the ſnipes*, recalling to my mind the pleaſures of a paſt period, made me dull. By degrees I found the melancholy which oppreſſed me increaſe. A ſerene ſky, the mild reflexion of the moon, the ſilver froth of the water which ſparkled around us, the concurrence of agreeable ſenſations, even the preſence of the beloved object herſelf, could not baniſh bitter reflexions from my mind.

I began with recollecting a walk of the ſame kind which we took together, during the rapture of our early loves. All the pleaſing ſenſations which then affected me were preſent to my mind, to torment me the more; all the adventures of our youth, our ſtudies, our entertainments, our letters, our aſſignations, our pleaſures,

E tanta

* The ſnipe on the lake of Geneva is not the bird called by that name in France. The more lively and animating chirping of the former gives an air of life and freſhneſs to the lake at night, which renders its banks ſtill more delightful.

E tanta fede, e ſi dolci memorie,
E ſi lungo coſtume!
Our conſtant vows, memorial ſweet!
Which love ſo often prompted to repeat.

A croud of objects, which recalled the image of my paſt happineſs, all preſſed upon me, and ruſhed into my memory, to increaſe my preſent wretchedneſs. It is paſt, ſaid I to myſelf; thoſe times, thoſe happy times, will be no more; they are gone for ever! Alas! they will never return; and yet we live, and we are together, and our hearts are ſtill united! I ſeemed as if I could have endured her death or her abſence with more patience; and thought that I had ſuffered leſs all the time I was parted from her. When I bewailed her at a diſtance, the hope of ſeeing her again was comfort to my ſoul; I flattered myſelf that the ſight of her would baniſh all my ſorrows in an inſtant, at leaſt, I could conceive it poſſible to be in a more cruel ſituation than my own. But to be by her ſide; to ſee her, to touch her, to talk to her, to love her, to adore her, and, whilſt I almoſt enjoyed her again, to find her loſt to me for ever; this was what threw me into ſuch fits of fury and rage, as by degrees agitated me even to deſpair. My mind ſoon began to conceive deadly projects, and in a tranſport, which I yet tremble to think of, I was violently tempted to throw her with myſelf into the waves, and to end my days and tedious torments in her arms. This horrid temptation grew ſo ſtrong

at

at laſt, that I was obliged ſuddenly to quit her hand, and walk to the other end of the boat.

There my lively emotions began to take another turn; a more gentle ſenſation by degrees ſtole upon my mind, and tenderneſs overcame deſpair; I began to ſhed floods of tears, and that condition, compared to the ſtate I had juſt been in, was not unattended with pleaſure. I wept heartily for a long time, and found myſelf eaſier. When I was tolerably compoſed, I returned to Eloiſa, and took her by the hand again. She had her handkerchief in her hand, which I found wet. "Ah! (ſaid I to her ſoftly) I find that our hearts have not ceaſed to ſympathiſe!"—"True (ſaid ſhe) in a broken accent, but may it be the laſt time they ever correſpond in this manner!" We then began to talk about indifferent matters, and, after an hour's rowing, we arrived without any other accident. When I came in, I perceived that her eyes were red, and much ſwelled; and ſhe muſt have diſcovered that mine were not in a better condition. After the fatigue of this day, ſhe ſtood in great need of reſt: ſhe withdrew, and I went to bed.

Such, my friend, is the journal of the day, in which, without exception, I experienced the moſt lively emotions I ever felt. I hope they will prove a criſis, which will entirely reſtore me to myſelf. Moreover, I muſt tell you that this adventure has convinced me, more than all the power of argument, of the free will of man, and the merit of virtue. How many people yield

yield to weak temptations? As for Eloiſa, my eyes beheld, and my heart felt her emotions: ſhe underwent the moſt violent ſtruggle that day that ever human nature ſuſtained; nevertheleſs, ſhe conquered. O, my lord, when, ſeduced by your miſtreſs, you had power at once to triumph over her deſires and your own, was you not more than man? But for your example I had perhaps been loſt. The recollection of your virtue renewed my own a hundred times in that perilous day.

LETTER CXXXV.*

FROM LORD B——.

AWAKE! my friend, and emerge from childhood. Let not your reaſon ſlumber to the end of your life. The hours glide imperceptibly away, and it is now high time for you to grow wiſe. At thirty years of age, ſurely, a man ſhould begin to reflect. Reflect, therefore, and be a man at leaſt once before you die.

Your heart, my dear friend, has long impoſed on your underſtanding. You ſtrove to philoſophiſe before you were capable of it, miſtaking your feelings for reaſon, and judging of things by the impreſſions they made on you, which has always kept you ignorant of their real ſtate. A good heart, I will own, is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the knowledge of truth: he who feels nothing

* This letter appears to have been written before the receipt of the preceding.

nothing can learn nothing; he may float from errour to errour in a ſea of ſcepticiſm, but his diſcoveries will be vain, and his information fruitleſs, being ignorant of the relation of things to man, on which all true ſcience depends. It were to ſtop half-way, however, in our purſuits after knowledge, not to enquire alſo into the relation of things to each other, in order to be better able to judge of their connexion with ourſelves. To know the nature and operation of our paſſions is to know little, if we know not, at the ſame time, how to judge of and eſtimate their objects. This latter knowledge is to be acquired only in the tranquillity of ſtudious retirement. The youth of the philoſopher is the time for experiment, his paſſions being the inſtrument of his enquiries; but after having applied himſelf long enough to the perception of external objects, he retires within himſelf to conſider, to compare, to know them. To this taſk you ought to apply yourſelf ſooner than any other perſon in the world. All the pleaſures and pains of which a ſuſceptible mind is capable you have felt; all that a man can ſee you have ſeen. In the ſpace of twelve years you have exhauſted all thoſe ſenſations which might have ſerved you during a long life, and have acquired even in youth the extenſive experience of age. The firſt obſervations you were led to make were on ſimple, unpoliſhed villagers, on perſons almoſt ſuch as they came out of the hand of nature; juſt as if they had been preſented to you

for

for the ground-work of your piece, or as proper objects by which to compare every other. Baniſhed next to the metropolis of one of the moſt celebrated people in the univerſe, you leaped, as one may ſay, from one extremity to the other, your genius ſupplying all the intermediate degrees. Then viſiting the only nation of *men* which remains among the various herds that are ſcattered over the face of the earth, you had an opportunity of ſeeing a well-governed ſociety, or at leaſt a ſociety under a good government; you had there an opportunity of obſerving how far the publick voice is the foundation of liberty. You have travelled through all climates, and have viſited all countries beneath the ſun. Add to this a ſight ſtill more worthy admiration, that which you enjoy in the preſence of the ſublime and refined ſoul, triumphant over its paſſions, and ruling over itſelf. The firſt object of your affections is that which is now daily before you, your admiration of which is but the better founded, for your having ſeen and contemplated ſo many others. There is now nothing more worth your attention or concern. The only object of your future contemplation ſhould be yourſelf, that of your future enjoyment the fruits of your knowledge. You have lived enough for this life; think now of living for that which is to come, and which will laſt for ever.

Your paſſions, by which you were ſo long enſlaved, did not deprive you of your virtue. This is

is all your boaſt, and doubtleſs you have reaſon to glory in it; yet, be not too proud. Your very fortitude is the effect of your weakneſs. Do you know how it came that you grew enamoured of virtue? It was becauſe virtue always appeared to your imagination in the amiable form of that lovely woman, by whom ſhe is ſo truely repreſented, and whoſe image you will always adore. But will you never love her for her own ſake? will you never, like Eloiſa, court virtue of your own accord? Vain and indolent enthuſiaſt! will you content yourſelf with barely admiring her virtues, without attempting to imitate them? You ſpeak in rapture of the manner in which ſhe diſcharges the important duties of wife and mother; but when will you diſcharge thoſe of a man and a friend, by her example! Shall a woman be able to triumph over herſelf, and a philoſopher find it ſo difficult to conquer his paſſions? Will you continue to be always a mere prater, like the reſt of them, and be content to write good books, inſtead of doing good actions*? Take care, my friend; I ſtill perceive an

* Not that this philoſophical age has not produced one true philoſopher. I know one, I muſt confeſs, and but one; but the happieſt circumſtance is, that he reſides in my native country. Shall I venture publickly to name him, whoſe honour it is to have remained unknown? Yes, learned and modeſt Abduzit, let your ſublime ſimplicity forgive my zeal, which, to ſay truth, hath not your name for its object. No, it is not you I would make known in an age unworthy to admire you; it is Geneva I would

an air of ſoftneſs and effeminacy in your writing, which diſpleaſes me, as I think it rather the effect of an unextinguiſhed paſſion than peculiar to your character. I hate imbecility in any one, and cannot bear the thoughts of it in my friend. There is no ſuch thing as virtue without fortitude, for puſillanimity is the certain attendant on vice. How dare you rely on your own ſtrength, who have no courage? Believe me, were Eloiſa as weak as you, the very firſt opportunity would debaſe you into an infamous adulterer. While you remain alone with her, therefore, learn to know her worth, and bluſh at your own demerit.

I hope ſoon to be able to ſee you at Clarens; you know the motives of my deſiring to ſee Italy again. Twelve years of miſtakes and troubles have rendered me ſuſpicious of myſelf; to reſiſt my inclinations, however, my own abilities might

would honour, by making it known as the place of your reſidence. It is my fellow-citizens who are honoured by your preſence. Happy the country where the merit that conceals itſelf is by ſo much the more eſteemed. Happy the people, among whom preſumptuous and forward youth is aſhamed of its dogmatick inſolence, and bluſhes at its vain knowledge before the learned ignorance of age. Venerable and virtuous old man! you have never been praiſed by babbling wits; no noiſy academician has written your eulogium. Inſtead of depoſiting all your wiſdom in books, you have diſplayed it in your life, as an example to the country you have deigned to make the object of your eſteem. You have lived like Socrates; but he died by the hands of his fellow-citizens, while you are cheriſhed by your's.

might ſuffice; but to give the preference of one to the other, to know which I ſhould indulge, requires the aſſiſtance of a friend: nor ſhall I take leſs pleaſure in being obliged to him on this occaſion, than I have done in obliging him on others. Between friends, their obligations, as well as their affections, ſhould be reciprocal. Do not deceive yourſelf, however; before I put any confidence in you, I ſhall enquire whether you are worthy of it, and if you deſerve to return me the ſervices you have formerly received. Your heart I know, and am ſatisfied with its integrity; but this is not all: it is your judgement I ſhall have occaſion for, to direct me in making a choice which ſhould be governed entirely by reaſon, and in which mine may be partial. I am not apprehenſive of danger from thoſe paſſions, which, making open war upon us, give us warning to put ourſelves upon our defenſe; and, whatever be their effect, leave us ſtill conſcious of our errours. We cannot ſo properly be ſaid to be overcome by theſe, as to give way to them. I am more fearful of deluſion than conſtraint, and of being involuntarily induced to do what my reaſon condemns. We have no need of foreign aſſiſtance to ſuppreſs our inclinations; but the aſſiſtance of a friend may be neceſſary to point out which it is moſt prudent to indulge: in this caſe it is that the friendſhip of a wiſe man may be uſeful, by his viewing in a different light thoſe objects with which it is our intereſt to be intimately acquainted. Examine your-

ſelf, therefore, and tell me whether, vainly repining at your fate, you will continue for ever uſeleſs to yourſelf and others, or if, reſuming the command over yourſelf, you will at laſt become capable of adviſing and aſſiſting your friend.

My affairs will not detain me in London more than a fortnight longer, when I ſhall ſet out for our army in Flanders, where I intend to ſtay about the ſame time; ſo that you muſt not expect to ſee me before the end of next month, or the beginning of October. In the mean time, write no more to me at London, but direct your letters to the army, agreeably to the encloſed addreſs. When you write, proceed alſo in your deſcriptions; for, notwithſtanding the cenſure I paſs on your letters, they both affect and inſtruct me, giving me, at the ſame time, the moſt flattering ideas of a life of peace and retirement, agreeable to my temper and age. In particular, I charge you to eaſe my mind of the diſquietude you have excited concerning Mrs. Wolmar. If ſhe be diſſatisfied, who on earth can hope for happineſs? After the relation you have given me, I cannot conceive what can be wanting to complete her felicity.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

TO LORD E——.

YES, my lord, I can with tranſport aſſure you the affair of Meillerie was the criſis of my folly and misfortunes. My converſation with Mr. Wolmar made me perfectly acquainted with the true ſtate of my heart. That heart, too weak I confeſs, is nevertheleſs cured of its paſſion as much as it poſſibly can be; and I prefer my preſent ſtate of ſilent regret to that of being perpetually fearful of falling into guilt. Since the return of this worthy friend, I no longer heſitate to give him that title which you have rendered ſo valuable. It is the leaſt I can beſtow on every one who aſſiſts me in returning to the paths of virtue. My heart is now become as peaceful as the manſion I inhabit. I begin to be at eaſe in my reſidence; to live as if I was at home; and, if I do not take upon me altogether the tone and authority of maſter, I feel yet a greater pleaſure in ſuppoſing myſelf a brother of the family. There is ſomething ſo delightful in the ſimplicity and equality which reign in this retirement, that I cannot help being affected with tenderneſs and reſpect. Thus, I ſpend my days in tranquillity, amidſt practical philoſophy and ſuſceptible virtue. In company with this happy couple, their ſituation inſenſibly affects me, and raiſes my heart by degrees into uniſon with their's.

What

What a delightful retreat! What a charming habitation! A continuance in this place renders it even yet more delightful; and though it appear not very ſtriking at firſt ſight, it is impoſſible not to be pleaſed with it, when it is once known. The pleaſure Mrs. Wolmar takes in diſcharging the nobleſt duties, in making all who approach her virtuous and happy, communicates itſelf to all thoſe who are the objects of her care, to her huſband, her children, her gueſts, her domeſticks. No tumultuous ſcenes of noiſy mirth, no loud peals of laughter, are heard in this peaceful manſion; but, in their ſtead, you always meet with contented hearts and chearful countenances. If at any time you ſee a tear, it is the tear of ſuſceptibility and joy. Troubles, cares, and ſorrow intrude not here, any more than vice and remorſe, of which they are the fruits.

As to Eloiſa, it is certain that, excepting the ſecret cauſe of uneaſineſs with which I acquainted you in my laſt*, every thing conſpires to make her happy. And yet, with ſo many reaſons to be ſo, a thouſand other women would think themſelves miſerable in the ſame ſituation. Her uniform and retired manner of living would be to them inſupportable; they would think the noiſe of children inſufferable; they would be fatigued to death with the care of their family; they would not be able to bear the country; the

* The letter here alluded to is not inſerted in this collection. The reaſon of it will be ſeen hereafter.

eſteem and prudence of a huſband, not over tender, would hardly recompenſe them for his indifference and age; his preſence, and even his regard for them, would be burthenſome. They would either find means to ſend him abroad, that they might live more at their liberty; or would leave him to himſelf; deſpiſing the peaceful pleaſures of their ſituation, and ſeeing more dangerous ones elſewhere, they would never be at eaſe in their own houſe, unleſs when they came as viſitors. It requires a ſound mind to be able to enjoy the pleaſures of retirement; the virtuous only being capable of amuſing themſelves with their family concerns, and of voluntarily ſecluding themſelves from the world; if there be on earth any ſuch thing as happineſs, they undoubtedly enjoy it in ſuch a ſtate. But the means of happineſs are nothing to thoſe who know not how to make uſe of them; and we never know in what true happineſs conſiſts, till we have acquired a taſte for its enjoyment.

If I were deſired to ſpeak with preciſion, as to the reaſon why the inhabitants of this place are happy, I ſhould think I could not anſwer with greater propriety than to ſay, it is becauſe *they here know how to live*; not in the ſenſe in which theſe words would be taken in France, where it would be underſtood that they had adopted certain cuſtoms and manners in vogue: No, but they have adopted ſuch manners as are moſt agreeable to human life, and the purpoſes for which man came into the world; to that life

you mention, of which you have ſet me an example, which extends beyond itſelf, and is not given up for loſt even in the hour of death.

Eloiſa has a father who is anxious for the honour and intereſts of his family: ſhe has children for whoſe ſubſiſtence it is neceſſary to provide. This ought to be the chief care of man in a ſtate of ſociety; and was, therefore the firſt in which Eloiſa and her huſband united. When they began houſe-keeping, they examined into the ſtate of their fortunes; not conſidering ſo much whether they were proportioned to their rank, as to their wants; and ſeeing they were ſufficient for the proviſion of an honourable family, they had not ſo bad an opinion of their children, as to be fearful leſt the patrimony they had to leave would not content them. They applied themſelves, therefore, rather to improve their preſent, than acquire a larger fortune: they placed their money rather ſafely than profitably; and, inſtead of purchaſing new eſtates, ſet about increaſing the value of that which they already had; leaving their own example in this point, as the only treaſure by which they would deſire to ſee the inheritance of their offspring increaſed.

It is true, that an eſtate which is not augmented is liable to many accidents, by which it will naturally diminiſh: but if this were a ſufficient motive to begin increaſing, when could it ceaſe to be a pretext for a conſtant augmentation?

Muſt it be divided among ſeveral children? Be it ſo: muſt they be all idle? Will not the induſtry of each be a ſupplement to his ſhare? and ought it not to be conſidered in the partition? It is thus that inſatiable avarice makes its way under the maſk of prudence, and leads to vice under the cloak of its own ſecurity. "It is in vain (ſays Mr. Wolmar) to attempt to give to human affairs that ſtability which is not in their nature. Prudence itſelf requires that we ſhould leave many things to chance; and if our lives and fortunes depend ſo much on accident, what a folly is it to make ourſelves really unhappy, in order to prevent doubtful evils, or avoid inevitable dangers?"—The only precaution he took was, to live one whole year on his principal, in order to have ſo much before-hand to receive of the intereſt, ſo that he had always the yearly product of his eſtate at command. He choſe rather to diminiſh his capital than to be perpetually under the neceſſity of dunning for his rents; the conſequence of which has been in the end advantageous to him, as it prevented him from borrowing, and other ruinous expedients, to which many people are obliged to have recourſe on every unforeſeen accident. Thus good management ſupplies the place of parſimony, and he is in fact a gainer by what he has ſpent.

The maſter of this houſe poſſeſſes but a moderate fortune, according to the eſtimation of the world; but in reality I hardly know any body

body more opulent. There is indeed no ſuch thing as abſolute wealth: that term ſignifying only the relation between the wants and poſſeſſions of thoſe who are rich. One man is rich, though poſſeſſing only an acre of land; another is a beggar in the midſt of heaps of gold. Luxury and caprice have no bounds, and make more perſons poor than real wants. But the proportion between their wants and their abilities of ſupplying them is here eſtabliſhed on a ſure foundation, namely the perfect harmony ſubſiſting between the huſband and wife: the former taking upon him the charge of collecting the rents and profits of his eſtate, and the latter, that of regulating their expenſes; and on this harmony depends their wealth.

I was at firſt ſtruck with a peculiarity in the œconomy of this houſe, where there appeared ſo much eaſe, freedom, and gaiety, in the midſt of order and diligence; the great fault of well-regulated houſes being, that they always wear an air of gloomineſs and reſtraint. The extreme ſollicitude alſo of the heads of the family looks too much like avarice. Every thing about them ſeems conſtrained, and there appears ſomething ſervile in their punctuality, which renders it intolerable. The domeſticks do their duty indeed, but then they do it with an air of diſcontent and miſtruſt. The gueſts, it is true, are well received; but they dare not make uſe of a freedom cautiouſly beſtowed, and are always afraid of doing ſomething that will be reckoned a breach

of regularity. Such ſlaviſh fathers of families cannot be ſaid to live for themſelves, but for their children; without conſidering that they are not only fathers but men, and that they ought to ſet their children an example how to live prudent and happy. More judicious maxims are adopted here. Mr. Wolmar thinks one of the principal duties of a father of a family is to make his houſe, in the firſt place, agreeable, that his children may delight in their home, and that ſeeing their father happy, they may be tempted to tread in his footſteps. Another of his maxims, and which he often repeats, is, that the gloomy and ſordid lives of fathers and mothers are almoſt always the firſt cauſe of the ill-conduct of children.

As to Eloiſa, who never had any other guide, and who needed no better, than her own heart, ſhe obeys, without ſcruple, its dictates; being then certain of doing right. Can a mind ſo ſuſceptible as her's be inſenſible to pleaſure? On the contrary, ſhe delights in every amuſement, nor refuſes to join in any diverſion that promiſes to be agreeable; but her pleaſures are the pleaſures of Eloiſa. She neglects neither her own convenience, nor the ſatisfaction of thoſe who are dear to her. She eſteems nothing ſuperfluous that may contribute to the happineſs of a ſenſible mind; but cenſures every thing as ſuch that ſerves only to make a figure in the eyes of others; ſo that you will find in this houſe all the gratifications which luxury and pleaſure

can

can beſtow, without refinement or effeminacy. With reſpect to magnificence and pomp, you will ſee no more of it than ſhe was obliged to ſubmit to, in order to pleaſe her father; her own taſte, however, prevails even here, which conſiſts in giving to every thing leſs brilliancy and ſhow than grace and elegance. When I talk to her of the methods which are daily invented at Paris and London, to hang the coaches eaſier; ſhe does not diſapprove of that; but when I tell her of the great expenſe they are at in the varniſhing of them, ſhe can hardly believe or comprehend me: ſhe aſks me, if ſuch fine varniſh makes the coaches more commodious. Indeed, ſhe ſcruples not to ſay that I exaggerate a good deal on the ſcandalous paintings with which they now adorn their equipages, inſtead of the coats of arms formerly uſed; as if it were more eligible to be known to the world for a man of licentious manners, than as a man of good family. But ſhe was particularly ſhocked when I told her that the ladies had introduced, and kept up this cuſtom, and that their chariots were diſtinguiſhable from thoſe of the gentlemen only by paintings more laſcivious and immodeſt. I was obliged to recount to her an expreſſion of your noble friend's, on this ſubject, which ſhe could hardly digeſt. I was with him one day to look at a vis-à-vis, which happened to be in this taſte. But he no ſooner caſt his eye on the pannels than he turned away from it, telling the owner, that he ſhould offer

carriages of that kind to wanton women of quality, for that no modeſt man could make uſe of them.

As the firſt ſtep to virtue is to forbear doing ill, ſo the firſt ſtep to happineſs is to be free from pain, Theſe two maxims, which, well underſtood, would render precepts of morality in a great degree uſeleſs, are favourite ones with Mrs. Wolmar. She is extremely affected by the misfortunes of others; and it would be as difficult for her to be happy with wretched objects about her, as it would be for an innocent man to preſerve his virtue, and live in the midſt of vice. She has none of that barbarous pity, which is ſatisfied with turning away its eye from the miſerable objects it might relieve. On the contrary, ſhe makes it her buſineſs to ſeek out ſuch objects: it is the exiſtence, and not the preſence of the unhappy which gives her affliction. It is not ſufficient for her to be ignorant that there are any ſuch; it is neceſſary to her quiet that ſhe ſhould be aſſured there are none miſerable; at leaſt within her ſphere of charity: for it would be unreaſonable to extend her concern beyond her own neighbourhood, and to make her happineſs depend upon the welfare of all mankind. She takes care to inform herſelf of the neceſſities of all that live near her, and intereſts herſelf in their relief, as if their wants were her own. She knows every one perſonally, includes them all, as it were, in her family, and ſpares no pains

to

to baniſh or alleviate thoſe misfortunes and afflictions to which human life is ſubject.

I am deſirous, my lord, of profiting by your inſtructions; but you muſt forgive me a piece of enthuſiaſm, of which I am no longer aſhamed, and with which you yourſelf are affected. There will never be another Eloiſa in the world. Providence takes a particular intereſt in every thing that regards her, nor leaves any thing to the conſequence of accident. Heaven ſeems to have ſent her upon earth, to ſerve at once as an example of that excellence of which human nature is capable, and of that happineſs it may enjoy in the obſcurity of private life, without having recourſe either to thoſe publick virtues which ſometimes raiſe humanity above itſelf, or to thoſe honours with which the breath of popular applauſe rewards them. Her fault, if love be a fault, has ſerved only to diſplay her fortitude and virtue. Her relations, her friends, her ſervants, all happily ſituated, were formed to reſpect her, and be reſpected by her. Her country is the only one upon earth where ſhe ought to have been born; to be happy herſelf, it was neceſſary for her to live among a happy people. If, to her misfortune, ſhe had been born among thoſe unhappy wretches, who groan beneath a load of oppreſſion, and ſtruggle in vain againſt the iron hand of cruelty, every complaint of the oppreſſed had poiſoned the ſweets of her life; the common ruin had been her's, and her benevolent heart had made her

feel inceſſantly thoſe evils ſhe could not have redreſſed.

Inſtead of that, every thing here animates and ſupports the native goodneſs of her diſpoſition. She has no publick calamities to afflict her. She ſees not around her the frightful pictures of indigence and deſpair. The villagers, in eaſy circumſtances, have more need of her advice than her bounty*. But, if there be found among them an orphan, too young to earn his ſubſiſtence; an obſcure widow, who pines in ſecret indigence; a childleſs father, whoſe hands, enfeebled by age, cannot ſupply him with the means of life; ſhe is not afraid that her bounty will increaſe the publick charge, by encouraging idleneſs or knavery. The happineſs ſhe herſelf feels multiplies and extends itſelf to all around her. Every houſe ſhe enters ſoon becomes a copy of her own: nor are convenience and order only purſued from her example, but harmony and goodneſs become equally the objects of domeſtick management. When ſhe goes abroad, ſhe ſees none but agreeable objects about her; and when ſhe returns home, ſhe is ſaluted by others ſtill more engaging. Her heart is delighted by every proſpect that meets her eyes; and, little ſuſceptible

* There is near Clarens a village called Moutru, the right of common to which is ſufficient to maintain the inhabitants, though they had not a foot of land of their own. For which reaſon, the freedom of that village is almoſt as difficult to be obtained as that of Berne. It is a great pity that ſome honeſt magiſtrate is not appointed, to make theſe burghers a little more ſociable, or their burgherſhip leſs dear.

ſuſceptible as it is of ſelf-love, it is led to love itſelf in the effects of its own benevolence. No, my lord, I repeat it again; nothing that regards Eloiſa can be indifferent to the cauſe of virtue. Her charms, her talents, her taſte, her errours, her afflictions, her abode, her friends, her family, her pains, her pleaſures, every thing in ſhort that completes her deſtiny, compoſe a life without example; ſuch as few women would chooſe to imitate, and yet ſuch as all, in ſpite of themſelves, muſt admire.

What pleaſes me moſt, in the ſollicitude which prevails here regarding the happineſs of others, is, that their benevolence is always exerted with prudence, and is never abuſed. We do not always ſucceed in our benevolent intentions; but, on the contrary, ſome people imagine they are doing great ſervices, who are, in reality, doing great injuries; and, with a view to a little manifeſt good, are guilty of much unforeſeen evil. Mrs. Wolmar, indeed, poſſeſſes, in an eminent degree, a qualification very rare, even among women of the beſt character; I mean, an exquiſite diſcernment in the diſtribution of her favours, and that as well in the choice of means to render them really uſeful, as of the perſons on whom they are beſtowed. For her conduct in this point, ſhe has laid down certain rules, to which ſhe invariably adheres. She knows how to grant or refuſe every thing that is aſked of her, without betraying the leaſt weakneſs in her compliance, or caprice in her denial. Whoever

ever hath committed one infamous or wicked action hath nothing to hope for from her but juſtice, and her pardon, if he has offended her; but never that favour and protection which ſhe can beſtow on a worthier object. I heard her once refuſe a favour, which depended on herſelf only, to a man of this ſtamp. "I wiſh "you happy (ſaid ſhe to him coldly) but I "ſhall not contribute any thing to make you "ſo, leſt I ſhould put it in your power to in-"jure others. There are too many honeſt "people in the world, who require relief, for "me to think of aſſiſting you." It is true, this piece of juſt ſeverity coſt her dear, and it is but ſeldom ſhe has occaſion to exerciſe it. Her maxim is, to look upon all thoſe as deſerving people, of whoſe demerits ſhe is not fully convinced; and there are few perſons weak and wicked enough not to evade the full proofs of their guilt. She has none of that indolent charity of the wealthy, who give money to the miſerable, to be excuſed from attending to their diſtreſs; and know how to anſwer their petitions only by giving alms. Her purſe is not inexhauſtible, and ſince ſhe is become the mother of a family, ſhe regulates it with more œconomy. Of all the kinds of relief we may afford to the unhappy, the giving alms is certainly that which coſts us leaſt trouble; but it is alſo the moſt tranſitory and leaſt ſerviceable to the object relieved: Eloiſa does not ſeek to get rid of ſuch objects, but to be uſeful to them.

Neither

Neither does ſhe grant her recommendation, or exert her good offices, without firſt knowing whether the uſe intended to be made of her intereſt be juſt and reaſonable. Her protection is never refuſed to any one who really ſtands in need of, and deſerves to obtain it: but for thoſe who deſire to raiſe themſelves through fickleneſs or ambition only, ſhe can very ſeldom be prevailed upon to give herſelf any trouble. The natural buſineſs of man is to cultivate the earth, and ſubſiſt on its produce. The peaceful inhabitant of the country needs only to know in what happineſs conſiſts, to be happy. All the real pleaſures of humanity are within his reach; he feels only thoſe pains which are inſeparable from it, thoſe pains which whoever ſeeks to remove will only change for others more ſevere*. His ſituation is the only neceſſary, the only uſeful one in life. He is never unhappy, but when others tyranniſe over him, or ſeduce him by their vices. In agriculture and huſbandry conſiſt the real proſperity of a country, the greatneſs and ſtrength which a people derive from themſelves, that which depends not on other nations, which is not obliged to attack others for its own preſervation, but is productive of the ſureſt means of its own defenſe. In making an eſtimate of the ſtrength of a nation, a ſuperficial obſerver would viſit the court, the prince,

* Man, perverted from his firſt ſtate of ſimplicity, becomes ſo ſtupid, that he even knows not what to deſire. His wiſhes always tend to wealth, and never to happineſs.

prince, his poſts, his troops, his magazines, and his fortified towns; but the true politician would take a ſurvey of the country, and viſit the cottages of the huſbandmen. The former would only ſee what is already executed, but the latter what was capable of being put into execution.

On this principle they proceed here, and yet more ſo at Etange; they contribute as much as poſſible to make the peaſants happy in their condition, without ever aſſiſting them to change it. The better, as well as the poorer ſort of people are equally deſirous of ſending their children to the cities; the one, that they may ſtudy and become gentlemen, the others, that they may find employment, and ſo eaſe their parents of the charge of maintaining them. The young people, on their part, have curioſity, and are generally fond of roving: the girls aſpire to the dreſs and finery of the citizens; and the boys, moſt of them, go into foreign ſervice, thinking it better to return with the haughty and mean air of mercenaries, and a ridiculous contempt of their former condition, than with that love for their country and liberty which honourably diſtinguiſhed their progenitors. It is the care of this benevolent family to remonſtrate againſt theſe miſtaken prejudices, to repreſent to the peaſants the danger of their children's principles; the ill conſequences of ſending them from home, and the continual riſks they run of loſing their life, fortune, and morals,

rals, where a thouſand are ruined for one who does well. If after all they continue obſtinate, they are left, at their own indiſcretion, to run into vice and miſery; and the care which was thrown away on them is turned upon thoſe who have liſtened to reaſon. This is exerted in teaching them to honour their native condition, by ſeeming to honour it ourſelves: we do not converſe with peaſants, indeed, in the ſtile of courts; but we treat them with a grave and diſtant familiarity, which, without raiſing any one out of his ſtation, teaches them to reſpect our's. There is not one honeſt labourer in the village who does not riſe greatly in his own eſtimation, when an opportunity offers of our ſhowing the difference of our behaviour to him, and to ſuch petty viſitants, who come home to make a figure for a day or two, and to eclipſe their relations. Mr. Wolmar and the Baron, when he is here, ſeldom fail of being preſent at the exerciſes and reviews of the militia of the village, and parts adjacent: their preſence has a great effect on the youth of the country, who are naturally of a martial and ſpirited temper, and are extremely delighted to ſee themſelves honoured with the preſence of veteran officers. They are ſtill prouder of their own merit, when they ſee ſoldiers retired from foreign ſervice leſs expert than themſelves: yet this they often do; for, do what you will, five-pence a-day, and the fear of being caned, will never produce that emulation which may be excited in a free

a free man under arms, by the preſence of his relations, his neighbours, his friends, his miſtreſs, and the honour of his country.

Mrs. Wolmar's great maxim is, therefore, never to encourage any one to change his condition, but to contribute all in her power to make every one happy in his preſent ſtation; being particularly ſollicitous to prevent the happieſt of all ſituations, that of a peaſant in a free ſtate, from being deſpiſed in favour of other employments.

I remember, that I one day made an objection on this ſubject, founded on the different talents which nature ſeems to have beſtowed on mankind, in order to fit them for different occupations, without any regard to their birth. This ſhe obviated, however, by obſerving that there were two more material things to be conſulted, before talents: theſe were, virtue and happineſs. "Man (ſaid ſhe) is too noble a being to be made a mere tool of for the uſe of others: he ought not to be employed in what he is fit for, without conſulting how far ſuch employment is fit for him; for we are not made for our ſtations, but our ſtations for us. In the right diſtribution of things, therefore, we ſhould not adapt men to circumſtances, but circumſtances to men; we ſhould not ſeek that employment for which a man is beſt adapted, but that which is beſt adapted to make him virtuous and happy. For it can never be right to deſtroy one human ſoul for the temporal advantage

advantage of others, nor to make any man a villain for the uſe of honeſt people. Now, out of a thouſand perſons who leave their native villages, there are not ten of them but what are ſpoiled by going to town, and become even more profligate than thoſe who initiate them into vice. Thoſe who ſucceed, and make their fortunes, frequently compaſs it by baſe and diſhoneſt means; while the unſucceſsful, inſtead of returning to their former occupation, rather chooſe to turn beggars and thieves. But, ſuppoſing that one out of the thouſand reſiſts the contagion of example, and perſeveres in the ſentiments of honeſty, do you think that, upon the whole, his life is as happy as it might have been in the tranquil obſcurity of his firſt condition?

"It is no eaſy matter to diſcover the talents with which nature hath ſeverally endowed us. On the contrary, it is very difficult to diſtinguiſh thoſe of young perſons the beſt educated and moſt attentively obſerved: how then ſhall a peaſant, meanly bred, preſume to judge of his own? There is nothing ſo equivocal as the genius frequently attributed to youth; the ſpirit of imitation has often a greater ſhare in it than natural ability, and very often it depends more on accident than a determined inclination; nor does even inclination itſelf always determine the capacity. Real talents, or true genius, are attended with a certain ſimplicity of diſpoſition, which makes it leſs reſtleſs

leſs and enterpriſing, leſs ready to thruſt itſelf forward than a ſuperficial and falſe one; which is nevertheleſs generally miſtaken for the true, and conſiſts only in a vain deſire of making a figure without talents to ſupport it. One of theſe geniuſes hears the drum beat, and is immediately in idea a general; another ſees a palace building, and directly commences architect. Thus Guſtin, my gardener, from ſeeing ſome of my works, muſt needs learn to draw. I ſent him to Lauſanne to a maſter, and he imagines himſelf already a fine painter. The opportunity, and the deſire of preferment, generally determine men's profeſſions. But it is not enough to be ſenſible of the bent of our genius, unleſs we are willing to purſue it. Will a prince turn coachman, becauſe he is expert at driving a ſet of horſes? Will a duke turn cook, becauſe he is ingenious at inventing ragouts? Our talents all tend to preferment; no one pretends to thoſe which would fit him for an inferiour ſtation: do you think this is agreeable to the order of nature? Suppoſe every one ſenſible of his own talents, and as willing to employ them, how is it poſſible? How could they ſurmount ſo many obſtacles? How could they overcome ſo many unworthy competitors? He who finds in himſelf the want of abilities, would call in ſubtlety and intrigue to his aid; and thereby frequently becomes an overmatch for others of greater capacity and ſincerity. Have you not told me yourſelf a hundred times,

that

that the many eſtabliſhments in favour of the arts have only been of prejudice to them? In multiplying indiſcreetly the number of profeſſors and academicians true merit is loſt in the crowd; and the honours due to the moſt ingenious are always beſtowed on the moſt intriguing. Did there exiſt, indeed, a ſociety, wherein the rank and employment of its reſpective members were exactly calculated to their talents and perſonal merit, every one might there aſpire to the place he ſhould be moſt fit for; but it is neceſſary to conduct ourſelves by other rules, and give up that of abilities, in ſocieties where the vileſt of all talents is the only one that leads to fortune.

"I will add further (continued ſhe) that I cannot be perſuaded of the utility of having ſo many different talents diſplayed. It ſeems neceſſary the number of perſons ſo qualified ſhould be exactly proportioned to the wants of ſociety; now, if thoſe only were appointed to cultivate the earth, who ſhould have eminent talents for agriculture; or if all thoſe were taken from that employment, who might be found more proper for ſome other; there would not remain a ſufficient number of labourers to furniſh the common neceſſaries of life. I am apt to think, therefore, that great talents in men are like great virtues in drugs, which nature has provided to cure our maladies, though its intention certainly was, that we ſhould never ſtand in need of them. In the vegetable creation

tion there are plants which are poiſonous; in the brutal, animals that would tear us to pieces; and among mankind there are thoſe who poſſeſs talents no leſs deſtructive to their ſpecies. Beſides, if every thing were to be put to that uſe for which its qualities ſeem beſt adapted, it might be productive of more harm than good in the world. There are thouſands of ſimple honeſt people, who have no occaſion for a diverſity of great talents; ſupporting themſelves better by their ſimplicity than others with all their ingenuity. But, in proportion as their morals are corrupted, their talents are diſplayed, as if to ſerve as a ſupplement to the virtues they have loſt, and to oblige the vicious to be uſeful, in ſpite of themſelves."

Another ſubject on which we differed, was the relieving of beggars. As we live near a publick road, great numbers are conſtantly paſſing by: and it is the cuſtom of the houſe to give to every one that aſks. I repreſented to her, that this practice was not only throwing that money away, which might be charitably beſtowed on perſons in real want; but that it tended to multiply beggars and vagabonds, who take pleaſure in that idle life, and, by rendering themſelves a burthen to ſociety, deprive it of their labour.

"I ſee very well (ſays ſhe) you have imbibed prejudices, by living in great cities, and ſome of thoſe maxims, by which your complaiſant reaſoners love to flatter the hard-heartedneſs of

the wealthy: you make uſe of their very expreſſions. Do you think to degrade a poor wretch below a human being, by giving him the contemptuous name of beggar? Compaſſionate as you really are, how could you prevail on yourſelf to make uſe of it? Repeat it no more, my friend, it does not come well from your lips: believe me, it is more diſhonourable for the cruel man by whom it is uſed, than for the unhappy wretch who bears it. I will not pretend to decide whether thoſe who thus inveigh againſt the giving alms are right or wrong; but this I know, that Mr. Wolmar, whoſe good ſenſe is not inferior to that of your philoſophers, and who has frequently told me of the arguments they uſe to ſuppreſs their natural compaſſion and ſenſibility, has always appeared to deſpiſe them, and has never diſapproved of my conduct. His own argument is ſimple. We permit, ſays he, and even ſupport at a great expenſe, a multitude of uſeleſs profeſſions; many of which ſerve only to ſpoil and corrupt our manners. Now, to look upon the profeſſion of a beggar as a trade, ſo far are we from having any reaſon to fear the like corruption of manners from the exerciſe of it, that, on the contrary, it ſerves to excite in us thoſe ſentiments of humanity which ought to unite all mankind. Again, if we look upon begging as a talent, why ſhould I not reward the eloquence of a beggar, who has art enough to excite my compaſſion, and induce me to relieve him, as well

well as I do a comedian, who on the ſtage makes me ſhed a few fruitleſs tears? If the one makes me admire the good actions of others, the other induces me to do a good action myſelf: all that we feel at the repreſentation of a tragedy goes off as ſoon as we come out of the playhouſe; but the remembrance of the unhappy object we have relieved gives continual pleaſure. A great number of beggars may be burthenſome to a ſtate: but of how many profeſſions, which are tolerated and encouraged, may we not ſay the ſame? It belongs to the legiſlature and adminiſtration to take care there ſhould be no beggars; but, in order to make them lay down their trade*, is it neceſſary to make

* To give to beggars, ſay ſome people, is to raiſe a nurſery of thieves: though it is, on the contrary, to prevent their becoming ſuch. I allow that the poor ought not to be encouraged to turn beggars; but, when once they are ſo, they ought to be ſupported, leſt they ſhould turn robbers. Nothing induces people to change their profeſſion ſo much as their not being able to live by it: now, thoſe who have once experienced the lazy life of a beggar get ſuch an averſion to work, that they had rather go upon the highway, at the hazard of their necks, than betake themſelves again to labour. A farthing is ſoon aſked for and ſoon refuſed; but twenty farthings might provide a ſupper for a poor man, whom twenty refuſals might exaſperate to deſpair: and who is there who would ever refuſe ſo ſlight a gift, if he reflected that he might thereby be the means of ſaving two men, the one from theft, and perhaps the other from being murthered? I have ſomewhere read, that beggars are a kind of vermin that hang about the wealthy. It is natural for children to cling about their parents; but the rich, like cruel parents, diſown their's, and leave them to be maintained by each other.

make all other ranks of people inhuman and unnatural? For my part, continued Eloiſa, without knowing what the poor may be to the ſtate, I know they are all my brethren, and that I cannot, without thinking myſelf inexcuſeable, refuſe them the ſmall relief they aſk of me. The greater part of them, I own, are vagabonds; but I know too much of life, to be ignorant how many misfortunes may reduce an honeſt man to ſuch a ſituation; and how can I be ſure, that an unhappy ſtranger, who comes in the name of God to implore my aſſiſtance, and to beg a morſel of bread, is not ſuch an honeſt man, ready to periſh for want, and whom my refuſal may drive to deſpair? The alms I diſtribute at the door are of no great value. A half-penny and a piece of bread are refuſed to nobody; and twice the proportion is always given to ſuch as are maimed, or otherwiſe evidently incapable of labour. Should they meet with the ſame relief at every houſe which can afford it, it would be ſufficient to ſupport them on their journey; and that is all a needy traveller has a right to expect. But ſuppoſing this was not enough to yield them any real help, it is at leaſt a proof that we take ſome part in their diſtreſs; a ſort of ſalutation that ſoftens the rigour of refuſing them more. A half-penny and a morſel of bread coſts little more, and are a more civil anſwer, than a mere *God help you*; which is too often the only thing beſtowed, as if the gifts of providence were not

placed in the hands of men, or that heaven had any other ſtore on earth than what is laid up in the coffers of the rich. In ſhort, whatever we ought to think of ſuch unfortunate wretches, and though nothing ſhould in juſtice be given to common beggars, we ought at leaſt, out of reſpect to ourſelves, to take ſome notice of ſuffering humanity, and not hearden our hearts at the ſight of the miſerable.

"This is my behaviour to thoſe, who, without any other ſubterfuge or pretext, come openly a begging. With reſpect to ſuch as pretend to be workmen, and complain for want of employment, we have here tools of almoſt every kind for them, and we ſet them to work. By this means we aſſiſt them, and put their induſtry to the proof; a circumſtance which is now ſo well known, that the lazy cheat never comes again to the gate."

It is thus, my lord, this angelick creature always deduces ſomething from her own virtues, to combat thoſe vain ſubtilities, by which people of cruel diſpoſitions palliate their vices. The ſollicitude and pains ſhe takes to relieve the poor are alſo ranked among her amuſements, and take up great part of the time ſhe can ſpare from her moſt important duties. After having performed her duty to others, ſhe then thinks of herſelf; and the means ſhe takes to render life agreeable may be reckoned among her virtues: ſo commendable are her conſtant motives of action, that moderation and good ſenſe are always

ways mixed with her pleaſures! She is ambitious to pleaſe her huſband, who always delights in ſeeing her chearful and gay: ſhe is deſirous of inſtilling into her children a taſte for innocent pleaſures, wherein moderation, order, and ſimplicity prevail, and ſecure the heart from the violence of impetuous paſſions. She amuſes herſelf, therefore, to divert them, as the dove ſoftens the grain to nouriſh the young ones.

Eloiſa's mind and body are equally ſenſible. The ſame delicacy prevails as well in her ſenſes as her ſentiments. She was formed to know and taſte every pleaſure. Virtue having been long eſteemed by her as the moſt refined of all delights, in the peaceful enjoyment of that ſupreme pleaſure ſhe debars herſelf of none that are conſiſtent with it; but then her method of enjoyment reſembles the auſterity of ſelf-denial: not indeed of that afflicting and painful ſelf-denial, which is hurtful to nature, and which its authour rejects as ridiculous homage; but of that ſlight and moderate reſtraint, by which the empire of reaſon is preſerved; and which ſerves as a whet to pleaſure, by preventing diſguſt. She will have it, that every thing which pleaſes the ſenſe, and is not neceſſary to life, changes its nature, whenever it becomes habitual; that it ceaſes to be pleaſant in becoming needful; that we thus by habit lay ourſelves at once under a needleſs reſtraint, and deprive ourſelves of a real pleaſure; and that the art of ſatisfying our deſires lies not in indulging, but in

ſuppreſſing them. The method ſhe takes to enhance the pleaſures of the leaſt amuſement, is to deny herſelf the uſe of it twenty times for once that ſhe enjoys it. Thus her mind preſerves its firſt vigour; her taſte is not ſpoiled by uſe; ſhe has no need to excite it by exceſs; and I have often ſeen her take exquiſite delight in a childiſh diverſion, which would have been inſipid to any other perſon on earth.

A ſtill nobler object, which ſhe propoſes to herſelf from the exerciſe of this virtue, is that of remaining always miſtreſs of herſelf, and thereby to accuſtom her paſſions to obedience, and to ſubject her inclinations to rule. This is a new way to be happy; for it is certain that we enjoy nothing with ſo little diſquietude as what we can part from without pain; and if the philoſopher be happy, it is becauſe he is the man from whom fortune can take the leaſt.

But what appears to me the moſt ſingular in her moderation, is, that ſhe purſues it for the very ſame reaſons which hurry the voluptuous into exceſs. Life is indeed ſhort, ſays ſhe, which is a reaſon for enjoying it to the end, and managing its duration in ſuch a manner as to make the moſt of it. If one day's indulgence and ſatiety deprives us of a whole year's taſte for enjoyment, it is bad philoſophy to purſue our deſires ſo far as they may be ready to lead us, without conſidering whether we may not out-live our faculties, and our hearts be exhauſted before our time. I ſee that our common epicures, in order

order to let ſlip no opportunity of enjoyment, loſe all; and, perpetually anxious in the midſt of pleaſures, can find no enjoyment in any. They laviſh away the time of which they think they are œconomiſts, and ruin themſelves, like miſers, by not knowing how to give any thing away. For my part, I hold the oppoſite maxim; and ſhould prefer, in this caſe, rather too much ſeverity than relaxation. It ſometimes happens that I break up a party of pleaſure, for no other reaſon than that it is too agreeable; and, by repeating it another time, have the ſatisfaction of enjoying it twice.

Upon ſuch principles are the ſweets of life, and the pleaſures of mere amuſement, regulated here. Amidſt her various application to the ſeveral branches of her domeſtick employment, Eloiſa takes particular care that the kitchen is not neglected. Her table is ſpread with abundance; but it is not the deſtructive abundance of fantaſtick luxury: all the viands are common, but excellent in their kind; the cookery is ſimple, but exquiſite. All that conſiſts in appearance only, whoſe nicety depends on the faſhion, all your delicate and far-fetched diſhes, whoſe ſcarcity is their only value, are baniſhed from the table of Eloiſa. Among the moſt delicious alſo of thoſe which are admitted, they daily abſtain from ſome; which they reſerve, in order to give an air of feſtivity to thoſe meals for which they were intended, and which are thereby rendered more agreeable, without being

more coſtly. But of what kind, think you, are theſe diſhes which are ſo carefully huſbanded? Choice game? Sea-fiſh? Foreign produce? No. Something better than all that. They are perhaps a particular choice ſallad of the country; fine greens of our own gardens; fiſh of the lake, dreſſed in a peculiar manner; cheeſe from the mountains; a German paſty, or game caught by ſome of the domeſticks. The table is ſerved in a modeſt and rural but agreeable manner, chearfulneſs and gratitude crowning the whole. Your gilt covers, round which the gueſts ſit ſtarving with hunger; your pompous glaſſes, ſtuck out with flowers for the deſert, are never introduced here, to take up the place intended for victuals; we are entirely ignorant of the art of ſatisfying hunger by the eye. But then no where do they ſo well know how to add welcome to good cheer, to eat a good deal without eating too much, to drink chearfully without intoxication, to ſit ſo long at table without being tired, and to riſe from it without diſguſt. On the firſt floor there is a little dining-room, different from that in which we uſually dine, which is on the ground-floor. This room is built in the corner of the houſe, and has windows in two aſpects: thoſe on one ſide overlook the garden, beyond which we have a proſpect of the lake between the trees: on the other ſide, we have a fine view of a ſpacious vineyard, that begins to diſplay the golden harveſt which we ſhall reap in about two

two months. The room is ſmall, but ornamented with every thing that can render it pleaſant and agreeable. It is here Eloiſa gives her little entertainments to her father, to her huſband, to her couſin, to me, to herſelf, and ſometimes to her children. When ſhe orders the table to be ſpread there, we know immediately the deſign; and Mr. Wolmar has given it the name of the Saloon of Apollo: but this ſaloon differs no leſs from that of Lucullus in the choice of the perſons entertained, than in that of the entertainment. Common gueſts are not admitted into it: we never dine there, when there are any ſtrangers: it is the inviolable aſylum of mutual confidence, friendſhip, and liberty. The ſociety of hearts is there joined to the ſocial bond of the table; the enterance into it is a kind of initiation into the myſteries of a cordial intimacy; nor do any perſons ever meet there, but ſuch as wiſh never to be ſeparated. We wait impatiently for you, my lord, who are to dine the very firſt day in the Apollo.

For my part, I was not at firſt admitted to that honour, which was reſerved for me till after my return from Mrs. Orbe's. Not that I imagined they could add any thing to the obliging reception I met with on my arrival; but the ſupper made for me there gave me other ideas. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the delightful mixture of familiarity, chearfulneſs, and ſocial eaſe, which I then experienced, and had never before taſted in my whole life. I found myſelf more at liberty,

without being told to aſſume it, and we ſeemed even to underſtand one another much better than before. The abſence of the domeſticks, who were diſmiſſed from their attendance, removed that reſerve which I ſtill felt at heart; and it was then that I firſt, at the inſtance of Eloiſa, reſumed the cuſtom I had laid aſide for many years of drinking wine after meals.

I was enraptured at this repaſt, and wiſhed that all our meals might have been made in the ſame manner. "I knew nothing of this delightful room (ſaid I to Mrs. Wolmar;) why don't you always eat here?"—"See (replied ſhe) how pretty it is! Would it not be a pity to ſpoil it?" This anſwer ſeemed too much out of character for me not to ſuſpect ſhe had ſome further meaning. "But why (added I) have you not the ſame conveniences below, that the ſervants might be ſent away, and leave us to talk more at liberty?" "That (replied ſhe) would be too agreeable, and the trouble of being always at eaſe is the greateſt in the world." I immediately comprehended her ſyſtem by this, and concluded that her art of managing her pleaſures conſiſted in being ſparing of them.

I think ſhe dreſſes herſelf with more care than formerly; the only piece of vanity I ever reproached her for being that of neglecting her dreſs. The haughty fair-one had her reaſons, and left me no pretext to diſown her power. But, do all ſhe could, my enchantment was too ſtrong for me to think it natural; I was too obſtinate

ſtinate in attributing her negligence to art. Not that the power of her charms is diminiſhed; but ſhe now diſdains to exert it; and I ſhould be apt to ſay, ſhe affected a greater neatneſs in her dreſs, that ſhe might appear only a pretty woman, had I not diſcovered the reaſon for her preſent ſollicitude in this point. During the firſt two or three days I was miſtaken; for, not reflecting that ſhe was dreſſed in the ſame manner at my arrival, which was unexpected, I thought ſhe had done it out of reſpect to me. I was undeceived, however, in the abſence of Mr. Wolmar. For the next day ſhe was not attired with that elegance which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed her the preceding evening, nor with that affecting and voluptuous ſimplicity which formerly enchanted me; but with a certain modeſty that ſpeaks through the eyes to the heart, that inſpires reſpect only, and to which beauty itſelf but gives additional authority. The dignity of wife and mother appeared in all her charms; the timid and affectionate looks ſhe caſt on me were now mixed with an air of gravity and grandeur, which ſeemed to caſt a veil over her features. In the mean time ſhe betrayed not the leaſt alteration in her behaviour; her equality of temper, her candour knew nothing of affectation. She practiſed only a talent natural to her ſex, to change ſometimes our ſentiments and ideas of them, by a different dreſs, by a cap of this form, or a gown of that colour. The day on which ſhe expected her huſband's return, ſhe again found the art of

adorning her natural charms without hiding them; ſhe came from her toilet indeed a dazzling beauty, and I ſaw ſhe was not leſs capable to outſhine the moſt ſplendid dreſs, than to adorn the moſt ſimple. I could not help being vexed, when I reflected on the cauſe of her preparation.

This taſte for ornament extends itſelf, from the miſtreſs of the houſe, through all the family. The maſter, the children, the ſervants, the equipage, the building, the garden, the furniture are all ſet off, and kept in ſuch order, as ſhows what they are capable of, though magnificence is deſpiſed. I do not mean true magnificence, and which conſiſts leſs in the expenſe, than in the good order and noble diſpoſition of things*.

For my own part, I muſt confeſs it appears to me a more grand and noble ſight, to ſee a ſmall number of people happy in themſelves, and in each other, in a plain modeſt family, than to ſee the moſt ſplendid palace filled with tumult and diſcord, and every one of its inhabitants taking advantage of the general diſorder, and building up

* And that it does ſo appears to me indiſputable. There is true magnificence in the proportion and ſymmetry of the parts of a great palace; but there is none in a confuſed heap of irregular buildings. There is a magnificence in the uniformity of a regiment in battalia; but none in the crowd of people that ſtand gazing on them, although perhaps there is not a man among them whoſe apparel is not of more value than thoſe of any individual ſoldier. In a word, magnificence is nothing more than a grand ſcene of regularity, whence it comes to paſs that, of all ſights imaginable, the moſt magnificent are thoſe of nature.

up their own fortunes and happineſs on the ruin of another. A well-governed private family forms a ſingle object, agreeable and delightful to contemplate; whereas, in a riotous palace, we ſee only a confuſed aſſemblage of various objects, whoſe connexion and dependence are merely apparent. At firſt ſight, indeed, they ſeem operating to one end; but, on examining them nearer, we are ſoon undeceived.

To conſult only our moſt natural impreſſions, it ſeems, that, to deſpiſe luxury and parade, we need leſs of moderation than of taſte. Symmetry and regularity are pleaſing to every one. The picture of eaſe and happineſs muſt affect every heart; but a vain pomp, which relates neither to regularity nor happineſs, and has only the deſire of making a figure in the eyes of others for its object, however favourable an idea it may excite in us of the perſon who diſplays it, can give little pleaſure to the ſpectator. But what is taſte? Does not a hundred times more taſte appear in the order and conſtruction of plain and ſimple things, than in thoſe which are overloaded with finery? What is convenience? Is any thing in the world more inconvenient than pomp and pageantry*? What is grandeur?

* The noiſe of people in a houſe of diſtinction continually diſturbs the quiet of the maſter of it. It is impoſſible for him to conceal any thing from ſo many Argufes. A crowd of creditors make him pay dear for that of his admirers. His apartments are generally ſo large and ſplendid, that he is obliged to betake himſelf to a cloſet, that

It is precisely the contrary. When I see the intention of an architect to build a large palace, I immediately ask myself, why is it not larger? Why does not the man who keeps fifty servants, if he aims at grandeur, keep an hundred? That fine silver plate, why is it not gold? The man who gilds his chariot, why does he not also gild the ceiling of his apartment? If his ceilings are gilt, why does he not gild the roof too? He, who was desirous of building an high tower, was right in his intention to raise it up to heaven; otherwise it was to no purpose to build, as the point where he might at last stop would only serve to shew, at the greater distance, his want of ability. O man! vain and feeble creature! Show me thy power, and I will show thee thy misery.

A regularity in the disposal of things, every one of which is of real use, and all confined to the necessaries of life, not only presents an agreeable prospect, but as it pleases the eye,

that he may sleep at ease, and his monkey is often better lodged than himself. If he would dine, it depends on his cook, and not on his appetite; if he would go abroad, he lies at the mercy of his horses. A thousand embarrassments stop him in the streets; he is impatient to be where he is going, but knows not the use of his legs. His mistress expects him, but the dirty pavement frightens him, and the weight of his laced coat oppresses him, so that he cannot walk twenty paces. Hence he loses, indeed, the opportunity of seeing his mistress; but he is well repaid by the by-standers for the disappointment, every one remarking his equipage, admiring it, and saying aloud to the person, There goes Mr. Such-a-one!

eye, at the ſame time gives content to the heart. For a man views them always in a pleaſing light, as relating to, and ſufficient for himſelf. The picture of his own wants or weakneſs does not appear, nor does the chearful proſpect affect him with ſorrowful reflexions. I defy any ſenſible man to contemplate, for an hour, the palace of a prince, and the pomp which reigns there, without falling into melancholy reflexions, and bemoaning the lot of humanity. On the contrary, the proſpect of this houſe, with the uniform and ſimple life of its inhabitants, diffuſe over the mind of the ſpectator a ſecret pleaſure, which is perpetually increaſing. A ſmall number of good-natured people, united by their mutual wants and reciprocal benevolence, concur by their different employments in promoting the ſame end; every one finding in his ſituation all that is requiſite to contentment, and not deſiring to change it, applies himſelf as if he thought to ſtay here all his life; the only ambition among them being that of properly diſcharging their reſpective duties. There is ſo much moderation in thoſe who command, and ſo much zeal in thoſe who obey, that equals might agree to diſtribute the ſame employments among them, without any one having reaſon to complain of his lot. No one envies that of another; no one thinks of augmenting his fortune, but by adding to the common good: the maſter and miſtreſs eſtimating their own happineſs by that of their domeſticks and the people

people about them. One finds here nothing to add or diminiſh, becauſe here is nothing but what is uſeful, and that indeed is all that is to be found; inſomuch that nothing is wanted which may not be had, and of that there is always a ſufficiency. Suppoſe, now, to all this were added lace, pictures, luſtres, gilding; in a moment you would impoveriſh the ſcene. In ſeeing ſo much abundance in things neceſſary, and no mark of ſuperfluity, one is now apt to think, that if thoſe things were the objects of choice which are not here, they would be had in the ſame abundance. In ſeeing alſo ſo plentiful a proviſion made for the poor, one is led to ſay, This houſe cannot contain its wealth. This ſeems to me true magnificence.

Such marks of opulence, however, ſurpriſed me, when I firſt heard what fortune muſt ſupport it. "You are ruining yourſelves (ſaid I to Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar): it is impoſſible ſo moderate a revenue can employ ſo much expenſe." They ſmiled, and ſoon convinced me, that, without retrenching any of their family expenſes, they could, if they pleaſed, lay up money, and increaſe their eſtate, inſtead of diminiſhing it. "Our grand ſecret to grow rich (ſaid they) is to have as little to do with money as poſſible, and to avoid as much as may be thoſe intermediate exchanges, which are made between the harveſt and the conſumption. None of thoſe exchanges are made without ſome loſs; and ſuch loſſes, if multiplied, would reduce a very

very good eſtate to little or nothing, as by means of brokerage a valuable gold box may fetch in a ſale the price only of a trifling toy. The expenſe of tranſporting our produce is avoided, by making uſe of ſome part on the ſpot, and that of exchange, by uſing others in their natural ſtate. And as for the indiſpenſible neceſſity of converting thoſe in which we abound for ſuch as we want, inſtead of making pecuniary bargains, we endeavour to make real exchanges, in which the convenience of both parties ſupplies the place of profit."

"I conceive (anſwered I) the advantages of this method; but it does not appear to me without inconvenience. For, beſides the trouble to which it muſt ſubject you, the profit muſt be rather apparent than real, and what you loſe in the management of your own eſtate probably overbalances the profits the farmers would make of you. The peaſants are better œconomiſts, both in the expenſes of cultivation, and in gathering their produce, than you can be."—"That (replied Mr. Wolmar) is a miſtake; the peaſant thinks leſs of augmenting the produce than of ſparing his expenſes, becauſe the coſt is more difficult for him to raiſe than the profits are uſeful. The tenant's view is not ſo much to increaſe the value of the land, as to lay out but little on it; and if he depends on any certain gain, it is leſs by improving the ſoil than exhauſting it. The beſt that can happen, is, that inſtead of exhauſting he quite neglects it. Thus, for the ſake of a little ready

ready money, gathered in with eaſe, an indolent proprietor prepares for himſelf, or his children, great loſſes, much trouble, and ſometimes the ruin of his patrimony.

"I do not deny (continued Mr. Wolmar) that I am at a much greater expenſe in the cultivation of my land than a farmer would be; but then I myſelf reap the profit of his labour, and the culture being much better than his, my crop is proportionably larger: ſo that though I am at a greater expenſe, I am ſtill, upon the whole, a gainer. Beſides, this exceſs of expenſe is only apparent, and is, in reality, productive of great œconomy; for, were we to let out our lands for others to cultivate, we ſhould be ourſelves idle: we muſt live in town, where the neceſſaries of life are dear; we muſt have amuſements, that would coſt us much more than thoſe we take here. The buſineſs which you call a trouble is at once our duty and our delight; and, thanks to the regulation it is under, is never troubleſome: on the contrary, it ſerves to employ us, inſtead of thoſe deſtructive ſchemes of pleaſure which people in town run into, and which a country life prevents, whilſt that which contributes to our happineſs becomes our amuſement.

"Look round you (continued he) and you will ſee nothing but what is uſeful; yet all theſe things coſt little, and ſave a world of unneceſſary expenſe. Our table is furniſhed with nothing but viands of our own growth; our dreſs and furniture are almoſt all compoſed of the manufactures

of

of the country: nothing is deſpiſed with us becauſe it is common, nor held in eſteem becauſe it is ſcarce. As every thing that comes from abroad is liable to be diſguiſed and adulterated, we confine ourſelves, as well through nicety as moderation, to the choice of the beſt home commodities, the quality of which is leſs dubious. Our viands are plain, but choice; and nothing is wanting to make our's a ſumptuous table, but the tranſporting it a hundred leagues off; in which caſe every thing would be delicate, every thing would be rare, and even our trouts of the lake would be thought infinitely better, were they to be eaten at Paris.

"We obſerve the ſame rule in the choice of our apparel, which you ſee is not neglected, but its elegance is the only thing we ſtudy, and not its coſt, and much leſs its faſhion. There is a wide difference between the price of opinion and the real value. The latter, however, is all that Eloiſa regards; in chooſing a gown, ſhe enquires not ſo much whether the pattern be old or new, as whether the ſtuff be good and becoming. The novelty of it is even ſometimes the cauſe of her rejecting it, eſpecially when it enhances the price, by giving it an imaginary value.

"You ſhould further conſider, that the effect of every thing here ariſes leſs from itſelf than from its uſe, and its dependences; inſomuch that out of parts worth little, Eloiſa has compounded a whole of great value. Taſte delights in creating and ſtamping upon things a value of its own:

as

as the laws of faſhion are inconſtant and deſtructive, her's is œconomical and laſting. What true taſte once approves muſt be always good, and though it be ſeldom in the mode, it is, on the other hand, never improper. Thus, in her modeſt ſimplicity, ſhe deduces, from the uſe and fitneſs of things, ſuch ſure and unalterable rules as will ſtand their ground when the vanity of faſhions is no more. The abundance of mere neceſſaries can never degenerate into abuſe; for what is neceſſary has its natural bounds, and our real wants know no exceſs. One may lay out the price of twenty ſuits of clothes in buying one, and eat up at a meal the income of a whole year; but we cannot wear two ſuits at one time, nor dine twice the ſame day. Thus, the caprice of opinion is boundleſs, whereas nature confines us on all ſides; and he, who, with a moderate fortune, contents himſelf with living well will run no riſque of ruin.

"Hence, you ſee (continued the prudent Wolmar) in what manner a little œconomy and induſtry may lift us out of the reach of fortune. It depends only on ourſelves to increaſe our's, without changing our manner of living; for we advance nothing but with a view of profit, and whatever we expend puts us ſoon in a condition to expend much more."

And yet, my lord, nothing of all this appears at firſt ſight: the general air of affluence and profuſion hides that order and regularity to which it is owing. One muſt be here ſome time

to

to perceive thoſe ſumptuary laws, which are productive of ſo much eaſe and pleaſure; and it is with difficulty that one at firſt comprehends how they enjoy what they ſpare. On reflexion, however, one's ſatisfaction increaſes, becauſe it is plain that the ſource is inexhauſtible, and that the art of enjoying life ſerves at the ſame time to prolong it. How can any one be weary of a ſtate ſo conformable to that of nature? How can he waſte his inheritance by improving it every day? How ruin his fortune, by ſpending only his income? When one year provides for the next, what can diſturb the peace of the preſent? The fruits of their paſt labour ſupport their preſent abundance, and thoſe of their preſent labour provide a future plenty: they enjoy at once what is expended and what is received, and both paſt and future times unite in the ſecurity of the preſent.

I have looked into all the particulars of domeſtick management, and find the ſame ſpirit extend itſelf throughout the whole. All their lace and embroidery are worked in the houſe; all their cloth is ſpun at home, or by poor women ſupported by their charity. Their wool is ſent to the manufactories of the country, from whence they receive cloth, in exchange, for clothing the ſervants. Their wine, oil, and bread are all made at home; and they have woods, of which they cut down regularly what is neceſſary for firing. The butcher is paid in cattle, the grocer in corn, for the nouriſhment of his family; the

wages

wages of the workmen and the ſervants are paid out of the produce of the lands they cultivate; the rent of their houſes in town ſerves to furniſh thoſe they inhabit in the country; the intereſt of their money in the publick funds furniſhes a ſubſiſtence for the maſters, and alſo the little plate they have occaſion for. The ſale of the corn and wine which remain furniſhes a fund for extraordinary expenſes; a fund which Eloiſa's prudence will never permit to be exhauſted, and which her charity will not ſuffer to increaſe. She allows for matters of mere amuſement the profits, only, of the labour done in the houſe, of the grubbing up uncultivated land, of planting trees, &c. Thus the produce and the labour always compenſating each other, the balance cannot be diſturbed; and it is impoſſible, from the nature of things, it ſhould be deſtroyed.

Add to this, that the abſtinence which Eloiſa impoſes on herſelf, through that voluptuous temperance I have mentioned, is at once productive of new means of pleaſure, and new reſources of œconomy. For example, ſhe is very fond of coffee, and, when her mother was living, drank it every day. But ſhe has left off that practice, in order to heighten her taſte for it, now drinking it only when ſhe has company, or in her favourite dining-room, in order to give her entertainments the air of a treat. This is a little indulgence, which is the more agreeable, as it coſts her little, and at the ſame time reſtrains and regulates

regulates her appetite. On the contrary, ſhe ſtudies to diſcover and gratify the taſte of her father and huſband with unwearied attention; a charming prodigality, which makes them like every thing ſo much the more, for the pleaſure they ſee ſhe takes in providing it. They both love to ſit a little after meals, in the manner of the Swiſs; on which occaſions, particularly after ſupper, ſhe ſeldom fails to treat them with a bottle of wine more old and delicate than common. I was at firſt deceived by the fine names ſhe gave to her wines, which, in fact, I found to be extremely good; and, drinking them as wines of the growth of the countries whoſe names they bore, I took Eloiſa to taſk for ſo manifeſt a breach of her own maxims; but ſhe laughed at me, and put me in mind of a paſſage in Plutarch, where Flaminius compares the Aſiatick troops of Antiochus, diſtinguiſhed by a thouſand barbarous names, to the ſeveral ragouts under which a friend of his had diſguiſed one and the ſame kind of meat. "It is juſt ſo (ſaid ſhe) with theſe foreign wines. The Liſbon, the Sherry, the Malaga, the Champagne, the Syracuſe, which you have drunk here with ſo much pleaſure, are all, in fact, no other than wines of this country, and you ſee from hence the vineyard that produced them. If they are inferior in quality to the celebrated wines whoſe names they bear, they are alſo without their inconveniencies; and as one is certain of the materials of which they are compoſed, they may be drunk with leſs danger. I

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have reaſon to believe (continued ſhe) that my father and huſband like them as well as more ſcarce and coſtly wines."—"Eloiſa's wines, indeed (ſays Mr. Wolmar) to me, have a taſte which pleaſes us better than any others, and that ariſes from the pleaſure ſhe takes in preparing them."—"Then (returned ſhe) they will be always exquiſite."

You will judge whether, amidſt ſuch a variety of buſineſs, that indolence and want of employment, which makes company, viſitings, and ſuch formal ſociety neceſſary, can find any place here. We viſit our neighbours, indeed, juſt enough to keep up an agreeable acquaintance, but too little to be ſlaves to each other's company. Our gueſts are always welcome, but are never invited or entreated. The rule here is to ſee juſt ſo much company as to prevent the loſing a taſte for retirement, rural occupation ſupplying the place of amuſements: and to him who finds an agreeable and peaceful ſociety in his own family, all other company is inſipid. The manner, however, in which we paſs our time is too ſimple and uniform to tempt many people, but it is the diſpoſition of thoſe who have adopted it that makes it delightful. How can perſons of a ſound mind be wearied with diſcharging the moſt endearing and pleaſing duties of humanity, and with rendering each other's lives mutually happy? Satisfied every night with the tranſactions of the day, Eloiſa wiſhes for nothing different on the morrow. Her conſtant morn-

ing prayer is, that the preſent day may prove like the paſt. She is engaged perpetually in the ſame round of buſineſs, becauſe no alteration would give her more pleaſure. Thus, without doubt, ſhe enjoys all the happineſs of which human life is capable: for is not our being pleaſed with the continuation of our lot a certain ſign that we are happy? One ſeldom ſees in this place thoſe knots of idle people, which are uſually called good company; but then one beholds thoſe who intereſt our affections infinitely more, ſuch as peaceable peaſants, without art, and without politeneſs; but honeſt, ſimple, and contented in their ſtation: old officers retired from the ſervice; merchants wearied with application to buſineſs, and tired of growing rich; prudent mothers of families, who bring their children to the ſchool of modeſty and good manners: ſuch is the company Eloiſa aſſembles about her. To theſe her huſband ſometimes adds ſome of thoſe adventurers, reformed by age and experience, who having purchaſed wiſdom at their own coſt, return, without reluctance, to cultivate their paternal ſoil, which they wiſh they had never left. When any one relates at table the occurrences of their lives, they conſiſt not of the marvellous adventures of the wealthy Sinbad, recounting, in the midſt of eaſtern pomp and effeminacy, how he acquired his vaſt wealth. Their tales are the ſimple narratives of men of ſenſe, who, from the caprice of fortune, and the injuſtice of mankind,

mankind, are diſguſted with the vain purſuit of imaginary happineſs, and have acquired a taſte for the objects of true felicity.

Would you believe that even the converſation of peaſants hath its charms for theſe elevated minds, of whom the philoſopher himſelf might be glad to profit in wiſdom? The judicious Wolmar diſcovers in their rural ſimplicity more characteriſtical diſtinctions, more men that think for themſelves, than under the uniform maſk worn in great cities, where every one appears what other people are, rather than what he is himſelf. The affectionate Eloiſa finds their hearts ſuſceptible of the ſmalleſt offers of kindneſs, and that they eſteem themſelves happy in the intereſt ſhe takes in their happineſs. Neither their hearts nor underſtandings are formed by art; they have not learned to model themſelves after the faſhion, and are leſs the creatures of men than thoſe of nature.

Mr. Wolmar often picks up, in his rounds, ſome honeſt old peaſant, whoſe experience and underſtanding give him great pleaſure. He brings him home to Eloiſa, by whom he is received in a manner which denotes, not her politeneſs, or the dignity of her ſtation, but the benevolence and humanity of her character. The good man is kept to dinner; Eloiſa placing him next herſelf, obligingly helping him, and aſking kindly after his family and affairs. She ſmiles not at his embarraſſment, nor takes notice of the ruſticity of his manners; but, by the eaſe of her own

behaviour, frees him from all reſtraint, maintaining throughout that tender and affectionate reſpect which is due to an infirm old age, honoured by an irreproachable life. The venerable old man is enraptured, and, in the fullneſs of heart, ſeems to experience again the vivacity of youth. In drinking healths to a young and beautiful lady, his half-frozen blood grows warm; and he begins to talk of former times, the days of his youth, his amours, the campaigns he has made, the battles he has been in, of the magnanimity and feats of his fellow-ſoldiers, of his return to his native country, of his wife, his children, his rural employments, the inconveniences he has remarked, and the remedies he thinks may be applied to remove them: during which long detail, he often lets fall ſome excellent moral, or uſeful leſſon in agriculture, the dictates of age and experience; but be there even nothing in what he ſays, ſo long as he takes a pleaſure in ſaying it Eloiſa would take pleaſure in hearing.

After dinner ſhe retires into her own apartment, to fetch ſome little preſent for the wife or daughter of the good old man. This is preſented to him by the children, who in return receive ſome trifle of him, with which ſhe had ſecretly provided him for that purpoſe. Thus ſhe initiates them betimes to that intimate and pleaſing benevolence, which knits the bond of ſociety between perſons of different conditions. The children are accordingly accuſtomed to

reſpect old age, to eſteem ſimplicity of manners, and to diſtinguiſh merit in all ranks of people. The young peaſants, on the other hand, ſeeing their fathers thus entertained at a gentleman's houſe, and admitted to the maſter's table, take no offenſe at being themſelves excluded; they think ſuch excluſion not owing to their rank, but their age; they do not ſay, We are too poor, but, we are too young to be thus treated. Thus the honour done to their aged parents, and their hope of one day enjoying the ſame diſtinction, make them amends for being debarred from it at preſent, and excite them to become worthy of it. At his return home to his cottage, their delighted gueſt impatiently produces the preſents he has brought his wife and children, who are overjoyed at the honour done them; the good old man, at the ſame time, eagerly relating to them the reception he met with, the dainties he has eaten, the wines he has taſted, the obliging diſcourſe and converſation, the affability of the gentlefolks, and the aſſiduity of the ſervants; in the recital of all which he enjoys it a ſecond time, and the whole family partake of the honour done to their head. They join in concert to bleſs that illuſtrious houſe, which affords at once an example to the rich, and an aſylum for the poor, and whoſe generous inhabitants diſdain not the indigent, but do honour to grey hairs. Such is the incenſe that is pleaſing to benevolent minds; and if there be any prayers to which heaven lends a gracious ear, they are certainly,

tainly, not thoſe which are offered up by meanneſs and flattery, in the hearing of the perſon prayed for, but ſuch as the grateful and ſimple heart dictates in ſecret, beneath its own roof.

It is thus that agreeable and affectionate ſentiments give charms to a life inſipid to indifferent minds: it is thus that buſineſs, labour, and retirement become amuſing by the art of managing them. A ſound mind knows how to take delight in vulgar employments, as a healthful body reliſhes the moſt ſimple aliments. All thoſe indolent people, who are diverted with ſo much difficulty, owe their diſguſt to their vices, and loſe their taſte for pleaſure only with that of their duty. As to Eloiſa, it is directly contrary; the employment, which a certain languor of mind made her formerly neglect, becomes now intereſting from the motive that excites to it. One muſt be totally inſenſible to be always without vivacity. She formerly ſought ſolitude and retirement, in order to indulge her reflexions on the object of her paſſion; at preſent, ſhe has acquired new activity, by having formed new and different connexions. She is not one of thoſe indolent mothers of a family, who are contented to ſtudy their duty when they ſhould diſcharge it, and loſe their time in enquiring after the buſineſs of others, which they ſhould employ in deſpatching their own. Eloiſa practiſes at preſent what ſhe learnt long ago. Her time for reading and ſtudy has given place to that of action. As ſhe riſes an hour later than her

huſband, ſo ſhe goes an hour later to bed. This hour is the only time ſhe employs in ſtudy; for the day is not too long for the various buſineſs in which ſhe is engaged.

This, my lord, is what I had to ſay to you concerning the œconomy of this houſe, and of the retired life of thoſe who govern it. Contented in their ſtation, they peaceably enjoy its conveniences; ſatisfied with their fortune, they ſeek not to augment it for their children; but to leave them, with the inheritance they themſelves received, an eſtate in good condition, affectionate ſervants, a taſte for employment, order, moderation, and for every thing that can render delightful and agreeable to men of ſenſe the enjoyment of a moderate fortune, as prudently preſerved as honeſtly acquired.

LETTER CXXXIX.

TO LORD B——.

WE have had viſitors for ſome days paſt. They left us yeſterday, and we renewed that agreeable ſociety ſubſiſting between us three, which is by ſo much the more delightful, as there is nothing, even in the bottom of our hearts, that we deſire to hide from each other. What a pleaſure do I take, in reſuming a new being, which renders me worthy of your confidence! At every mark of eſteem which I receive

receive from Eloiſa and her huſband, I ſay to myſelf, with an air of ſelf-ſufficiency, At length I may venture to appear before Lord B——. It is with your aſſiſtance, it is under your eyes, that I hope to do honour to my preſent ſituation by my paſt follies. If an extinguiſhed paſſion caſts the mind into a ſtate of dejection, a paſſion ſubdued adds to the conſciouſneſs of victory a new elevation of ſentiment, a more lively attachment to all that is ſublime and beautiful. Shall I loſe the fruit of a ſacrifice which hath coſt me ſo dear? No, my lord; I feel that, animated by your example, my heart is going to profit by all thoſe arduous ſentiments it has conquered. I feel that it was neceſſary for me to be what I was, in order for me to become what I am.

After having thrown away ſix days in frivolous converſation with perſons indifferent to us, we paſſed yeſterday morning, after the manner of the Engliſh, in company and ſilence; taſting at once the pleaſure of being together and the ſweetneſs of ſelf-recollection. How ſmall a part of mankind know any thing of the pleaſures of this ſituation! I never ſaw a perſon in France who had the leaſt idea of it. The converſation of friends, ſay they, can never be exhauſted. It is true, the tongue may eaſily find words for common attachments: but friendſhip, my lord, friendſhip! thou animating celeſtial ſentiment! what language is worthy of thee? What tongue preſumes to be thy interpreter? Can any thing ſpoken to a friend equal what is felt in his com-

pany? Good God! how many things are conveyed by a ſqueeſe of the hand, by an animating look, by an eager embrace, by a ſigh that riſes from the bottom of the heart? And how cold in compariſon is the firſt word which is ſpoken after that! I ſhall never forget the evenings I paſſed at Beſançon; thoſe delightful moments ſacred to ſilence and friendſhip. Never, O B——! thou nobleſt of men! ſublimeſt of friends! No, never have I undervalued what you then did for me; never have my lips preſumed to mention it. It is certain that this ſtate of contemplation affords the greateſt delight to ſuſceptible minds. But I have always obſerved that impertinent viſitors prevent one from enjoying it, and that friends ought to be by themſelves, to be at liberty to ſay nothing. At ſuch a time one ſhould be, if one may uſe the expreſſion, collected in each other; the leaſt avocation is deſtructive, the leaſt conſtraint is inſupportable. It is then ſo ſweet to pronounce the dictates of the heart without reſtraint. It ſeems as if one dared to think freely only of what one can as freely ſpeak; it ſeems as if the preſence of a ſtranger reſtrained the ſentiment, and compreſſed thoſe hearts which could ſo fully dictate themſelves alone.

Two hours paſſed away in this ſilent extacy, more delightful a thouſand times than the frigid repoſe of the deities of Epicurus. After breakfaſt, the children came, as uſual, into the apartment of Eloiſa; who, inſtead of retiring, and

ſhutting

ſhutting herſelf up with them in the work-room, according to cuſtom, kept them with her, as if to make them ſome amends for the time they had loſt without ſeeing us: and we none of us parted till dinner. Harriet, who begins to know how to handle her needle, ſat at work before Fanny, who was weaving lace, and reſted her cuſhion on the back of her little chair. The two boys were buſy at a table, turning over the leaves of a book of prints, the ſubject of which the eldeſt explained to the younger, Harriet, who knew the whole by heart, being attentive to, and correcting him when wrong: and ſometimes, pretending to be ignorant what figures they were at, ſhe made it a pretence to riſe, and go backwards and forwards from the chair to the table. During theſe little leſſons, which were given and taken with little pains and leſs reſtraint, the younger boy was playing with ſome counters which he had ſecreted under the book. Mrs. Wolmar was at work on ſome embroidery near the window oppoſite the children, and her huſband and I were ſtill ſitting at the tea-table, reading the Gazette, to which ſhe gave but little attention. But when we came to the article which mentions the illneſs of the King of France, and the ſingular attachment of his people, unequalled by any thing but that of the Romans for Germanicus, ſhe made ſome reflexions on the diſpoſition of that affectionate and benevolent nation, whom all the world hate, whilſt they have no hatred to any one; adding, that ſhe

envied only a ſovereign the power of making himſelf beloved. To this her huſband replied, "You have no need to envy a ſovereign, who have ſo long had us all for your ſubjects." On which ſhe turned her head, and caſt a look on him ſo affecting and tender, that it ſtruck me prodigiouſly. She ſaid nothing, indeed; for what could ſhe ſay equal to ſuch a look? Our eyes met: and I could perceive, by the manner in which her huſband preſſed my hand, that the ſame emotion had affected us all three, and that the delightful influence of her expanſive heart diffuſed itſelf around, and triumphed over inſenſibility itſelf.

We were thus diſpoſed when that ſilent ſcene began, of which I juſt now ſpoke: you may judge that it was not the conſequence of coldneſs or chagrin. It was firſt interrupted by the little management of the children; who, nevertheleſs, as ſoon as we left off ſpeaking, moderated their prattle, as if afraid of diſturbing the general ſilence. The little teacher was the firſt that lowered her voice, made ſigns to the other, and ran about on tip-toe, while their play became the more diverting by this light conſtraint. This ſcene, which ſeemed to preſent itſelf in order to prolong our tenderneſs, produced its natural effect.

Ammutiſcon le lingue, e parlan l'alme.
Our hearts converſing while our tongues were mute.

How many things may be ſaid without opening one's lips! How warm the ſentiments that may be communicated, without the cold interpoſition of

of ſpeech! Eloiſa inſenſibly permitted her attention to be engaged by the ſame object. Her eyes were fixed on the three children; and her heart, raviſhed with the moſt enchanting extaſy, animated her charming features with all the affecting ſweetneſs of maternal tenderneſs.

Thus given up to this double contemplation, Wolmar and I were indulging our reveries, when the children put an end to them. The eldeſt, who was diverting himſelf with the prints, ſeeing the counters prevented his brother from being attentive, took an opportunity, when he had piled them up, to give them a knock, and throw them down on the floor. Marcellin fell a crying; and Eloiſa, without troubling herſelf to quiet him, bid Fanny pick up the counters. The child was immediately huſhed; the counters were nevertheleſs not brought him, nor did he begin to cry again, as I expected. This circumſtance, which, however, was nothing in itſelf, recalled to my mind a great many others, to which I had given no attention; and when I think of them, I do not remember ever to have ſeen children, with ſo little ſpeaking to, give ſo little trouble. They hardly ever are out of the mother's ſight, and yet one can hardly perceive they are in company. They are lively and playful, as children of their age ſhould be, but never clamorous or teizing; they are already diſcreet before they know what diſcretion is. But what ſurpriſes me moſt, is, that all this appears to be brought about of itſelf; and that with ſuch an affectionate

tenderneſs for her children, Eloiſa ſeems to give herſelf ſo little concern about them. In fact, one never ſees her very earneſt to make them ſpeak or hold their tongues, to make them do things or let them alone. She never diſputes with them; ſhe never contradicts them in their amuſements: ſo that one would be apt to think ſhe contented herſelf with ſeeing and loving them; and that when they have paſſed the day with her, ſhe had diſcharged the whole duty of a mother towards them.

But, though this peaceable tranquillity appears more agreeable in contemplation than the reſtleſs ſollicitude of other mothers, yet I was not a little ſurpriſed at an apparent indolence, ſo little agreeable to her character. I would have had her even a little diſcontented, amidſt ſo many reaſons to the contrary; ſo well doth a ſuperfluous activity become maternal affection! I would willingly have attributed the goodneſs of the children to the care of the mother; and ſhould have been glad to have obſerved more faults in them, that I might have ſeen her more ſollicitous to correct them.

Having buſied myſelf with theſe reflexions a long time in ſilence, I at laſt determined to communicate them to her. "I ſee (ſaid I one day) that heaven rewards virtuous mothers in the good diſpoſition of their children; but the beſt diſpoſition muſt be cultivated. Their education ought to begin from the time of their birth. Can there be a time more proper to form their minds,

minds, than when they have received no impreſſion that need to be effaced? If you give them up to themſelves in their infancy, at what age do you expect them to be docile? While you have nothing elſe to teach them, you ought to teach them obedience."—"Why (returned ſhe) do my children diſobey me?"—"That were difficult (ſaid I) as you lay no commands upon them." On this ſhe looked at her huſband and ſmiled; then, taking me by the hand, ſhe led me into the cloſet, that we might converſe without being overheard by the children.

Here, explaining her maxims at leiſure, ſhe diſcovered to me, under that air of negligence, the moſt vigilant attention of maternal tenderneſs. "I was a long time (ſaid ſhe) of your opinion with regard to the premature inſtruction of children; and while I expected my firſt child was anxious concerning the obligations I ſhould ſoon have to diſcharge. I uſed often to ſpeak to Mr. Wolmar on that ſubject. What better guide could I take than ſo ſenſible an obſerver, in whom the intereſt of a father was united to the indifference of a philoſopher? He fulfilled, and indeed ſurpaſſed my expectations. He ſoon made me ſenſible, that the firſt and moſt important part of education, preciſely that which all the world neglects*, is that of preparing a child to receive inſtruction.

* Locke himſelf, the ſagacious Locke, has forgot it, inſtructing us rather in the things we ought to require of our children, than in the means of obtaining them.

"The common errour of parents, who pique themſelves on their own knowledge, is to ſuppoſe their children capable of reaſoning as ſoon as they are born, and to talk to them as if they were grown perſons before they can ſpeak. Reaſon is the inſtrument they uſe, whereas every other means ought firſt to be uſed, in order to form their reaſon; for it is certain, that of all the knowledge which men acquire, or are capable of acquiring, the art of reaſoning is the laſt and moſt difficult to learn. By talking to them at ſo early an age, in a language they do not underſtand, they learn to be ſatisfied with mere words; to talk to others in the ſame manner; to contradict every thing that is ſaid to them; to think themſelves as wiſe as their teachers: and all that one thinks to obtain by reaſonable motives is in fact acquired only by thoſe of fear or vanity.

"The moſt conſummate patience would be wearied out, by endeavouring to educate a child in this manner; and thus it is, that, fatigued and diſguſted with the perpetual importunity of children, their parents, unable to ſupport the noiſe and diſorder they themſelves have given riſe to, are obliged to part with them, and to deliver them over to the care of a maſter; as if one could expect in a preceptor more patience and good-nature than in a father.

"Nature (continued Eloiſa) would have children be children before they are men. If we attempt to pervert that order, we produce only forward

forward fruit, which has neither maturity nor flavour, and will ſoon decay; we raiſe young profeſſors and old children. Infancy has a manner of perceiving, thinking, and feeling peculiar to itſelf. Nothing is more abſurd than to think of ſubmitting our's in its ſtead; and I would as ſoon expect a child of mine to be five feet high, as to have a mature judgement at ten years old.

"The underſtanding does not begin to form itſelf till after ſome years, and when the corporeal organs have acquired a certain conſiſtence. The deſign of nature is, therefore, evidently to ſtrengthen the body, before the mind is exerciſed. Children are always in motion; reſt and reflexion is inconſiſtent with their age; a ſtudious and ſedentary life would prevent their growth, and injure their health; neither their body nor mind can ſupport reſtraint. Shut up perpetually in a room with their books, they loſe their vigour, become delicate, feeble, ſickly, rather ſtupid than reaſonable; and their minds ſuffer, during their whole lives, for the weakneſs of their bodies.

"But, ſuppoſing ſuch premature inſtruction were as profitable as it is really hurtful to their underſtandings, a very great inconvenience would attend the application of it to all indiſcriminately, without regard to the particular genius of each. For, beſides the conſtitution common to its ſpecies, every child at its birth poſſeſſes a peculiar temperament, which determines its genius

genius and character; and which it is improper either to pervert or reſtrain; the buſineſs of education being only to model and bring it to perfection. All theſe characters are, according to Mr. Wolmar, good in themſelves: for nature, ſays he, makes no miſtakes*. All the vices imputed to malignity of diſpoſition are only the effect of the bad form it had received. According to him there is not a villain upon earth, whoſe natural propenſity, well directed, might not have been productive of great virtues; nor is there a wrong-head in being, that might not have been of uſe to himſelf and ſociety, had his natural talents taken a certain bias; juſt as deformed and monſtrous images are rendered beautiful and proportionable, by placing them in a proper point of view. Every thing (ſays he) tends to the common good in the univerſal ſyſtem of nature. Every man has his place aſſigned in the beſt order and arrangement of things; the buſineſs is to find out that place, and not to diſturb ſuch order. What muſt be the conſequence then of an education begun in the cradle, and carried on always in the ſame manner, without regard to the vaſt diverſity of temperaments and genius in mankind? Uſeleſs or hurtful inſtructions would be given to the greater part, while at the ſame time they are deprived of ſuch as would be moſt uſeful and convenient; nature

* This doctrine, ſo true in itſelf, ſurpriſes me, as adopted by Mr. Wolmar; the reaſon of it will be ſeen

forward fruit, which has neither maturity nor flavour, and will ſoon decay; we raiſe young profeſſors and old children. Infancy has a manner of perceiving, thinking, and feeling peculiar to itſelf. Nothing is more abſurd than to think of ſubmitting our's in its ſtead; and I would as ſoon expect a child of mine to be five feet high, as to have a mature judgement at ten years old.

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huſband, ſo ſhe goes an hour later to bed. This hour is the only time ſhe employs in ſtudy; for the day is not too long for the various buſineſs in which ſhe is engaged.

This, my lord, is what I had to ſay to you concerning the œconomy of this houſe, and of the retired life of thoſe who govern it. Contented in their ſtation, they peaceably enjoy its conveniences; ſatisfied with their fortune, they ſeek not to augment it for their children; but to leave them, with the inheritance they themſelves received, an eſtate in good condition, affectionate ſervants, a taſte for employment, order, moderation, and for every thing that can render delightful and agreeable to men of ſenſe the enjoyment of a moderate fortune, as prudently preſerved as honeſtly acquired.

LETTER CXXXIX.

TO LORD B——.

WE have had viſitors for ſome days paſt. They left us yeſterday, and we renewed that agreeable ſociety ſubſiſting between us three, which is by ſo much the more delightful, as there is nothing, even in the bottom of our hearts, that we deſire to hide from each other. What a pleaſure do I take, in reſuming a new being, which renders me worthy of your confidence! At every mark of eſteem which I receive

receive from Eloiſa and her huſband, I ſay to myſelf, with an air of ſelf-ſufficiency, At length I may venture to appear before Lord B——. It is with your aſſiſtance, it is under your eyes, that I hope to do honour to my preſent ſituation by my paſt follies. If an extinguiſhed paſſion caſts the mind into a ſtate of dejection, a paſſion ſubdued adds to the conſciouſneſs of victory a new elevation of ſentiment, a more lively attachment to all that is ſublime and beautiful. Shall I loſe the fruit of a ſacrifice which hath coſt me ſo dear? No, my lord; I feel that, animated by your example, my heart is going to profit by all thoſe arduous ſentiments it has conquered. I feel that it was neceſſary for me to be what I was, in order for me to become what I am.

After having thrown away ſix days in frivolous converſation with perſons indifferent to us, we paſſed yeſterday morning, after the manner of the Engliſh, in company and ſilence; taſting at once the pleaſure of being together and the ſweetneſs of ſelf-recollection. How ſmall a part of mankind know any thing of the pleaſures of this ſituation! I never ſaw a perſon in France who had the leaſt idea of it. The converſation of friends, ſay they, can never be exhauſted. It is true, the tongue may eaſily find words for common attachments: but friendſhip, my lord, friendſhip! thou animating celeſtial ſentiment! what language is worthy of thee? What tongue preſumes to be thy interpreter? Can any thing ſpoken to a friend equal what is felt in his com-

pany? Good God! how many things are conveyed by a ſqueeſe of the hand, by an animating look, by an eager embrace, by a ſigh that riſes from the bottom of the heart? And how cold in compariſon is the firſt word which is ſpoken after that! I ſhall never forget the evenings I paſſed at Beſançon; thoſe delightful moments ſacred to ſilence and friendſhip. Never, O B——! thou nobleſt of men! ſublimeſt of friends! No, never have I undervalued what you then did for me; never have my lips preſumed to mention it. It is certain that this ſtate of contemplation affords the greateſt delight to ſuſceptible minds. But I have always obſerved that impertinent viſitors prevent one from enjoying it, and that friends ought to be by themſelves, to be at liberty to ſay nothing. At ſuch a time one ſhould be, if one may uſe the expreſſion, collected in each other; the leaſt avocation is deſtructive, the leaſt conſtraint is inſupportable. It is then ſo ſweet to pronounce the dictates of the heart without reſtraint. It ſeems as if one dared to think freely only of what one can as freely ſpeak; it ſeems as if the preſence of a ſtranger reſtrained the ſentiment, and compreſſed thoſe hearts which could ſo fully dictate themſelves alone.

Two hours paſſed away in this ſilent extacy, more delightful a thouſand times than the frigid repoſe of the deities of Epicurus. After breakfaſt, the children came, as uſual, into the apartment of Eloiſa; who, inſtead of retiring, and

ſhutting

ſhutting herſelf up with them in the work-room, according to cuſtom, kept them with her, as if to make them ſome amends for the time they had loſt without ſeeing us: and we none of us parted till dinner. Harriet, who begins to know how to handle her needle, ſat at work before Fanny, who was weaving lace, and reſted her cuſhion on the back of her little chair. The two boys were buſy at a table, turning over the leaves of a book of prints, the ſubject of which the eldeſt explained to the younger, Harriet, who knew the whole by heart, being attentive to, and correcting him when wrong: and ſometimes, pretending to be ignorant what figures they were at, ſhe made it a pretence to riſe, and go backwards and forwards from the chair to the table. During theſe little leſſons, which were given and taken with little pains and leſs reſtraint, the younger boy was playing with ſome counters which he had ſecreted under the book. Mrs. Wolmar was at work on ſome embroidery near the window oppoſite the children, and her huſband and I were ſtill ſitting at the tea-table, reading the Gazette, to which ſhe gave but little attention. But when we came to the article which mentions the illneſs of the King of France, and the ſingular attachment of his people, unequalled by any thing but that of the Romans for Germanicus, ſhe made ſome reflexions on the diſpoſition of that affectionate and benevolent nation, whom all the world hate, whilſt they have no hatred to any one; adding, that ſhe

envied only a ſovereign the power of making himſelf beloved. To this her huſband replied, "You have no need to envy a ſovereign, who have ſo long had us all for your ſubjects." On which ſhe turned her head, and caſt a look on him ſo affecting and tender, that it ſtruck me prodigiouſly. She ſaid nothing, indeed; for what could ſhe ſay equal to ſuch a look? Our eyes met: and I could perceive, by the manner in which her huſband preſſed my hand, that the ſame emotion had affected us all three, and that the delightful influence of her expanſive heart diffuſed itſelf around, and triumphed over inſenſibility itſelf.

We were thus diſpoſed when that ſilent ſcene began, of which I juſt now ſpoke: you may judge that it was not the conſequence of coldneſs or chagrin. It was firſt interrupted by the little management of the children; who, nevertheleſs, as ſoon as we left off ſpeaking, moderated their prattle, as if afraid of diſturbing the general ſilence. The little teacher was the firſt that lowered her voice, made ſigns to the other, and ran about on tip-toe, while their play became the more diverting by this light conſtraint. This ſcene, which ſeemed to preſent itſelf in order to prolong our tenderneſs, produced its natural effect.

Ammutiſcon le lingue, e parlan l'alme.
Our hearts converſing while our tongues were mute.

How many things may be ſaid without opening one's lips! How warm the ſentiments that may be communicated, without the cold interpoſition of

of ſpeech! Eloiſa inſenſibly permitted her attention to be engaged by the ſame object. Her eyes were fixed on the three children; and her heart, raviſhed with the moſt enchanting extaſy, animated her charming features with all the affecting ſweetneſs of maternal tenderneſs.

Thus given up to this double contemplation, Wolmar and I were indulging our reveries, when the children put an end to them. The eldeſt, who was diverting himſelf with the prints, ſeeing the counters prevented his brother from being attentive, took an opportunity, when he had piled them up, to give them a knock, and throw them down on the floor. Marcellin fell a crying; and Eloiſa, without troubling herſelf to quiet him, bid Fanny pick up the counters. The child was immediately huſhed; the counters were nevertheleſs not brought him, nor did he begin to cry again, as I expected. This circumſtance, which, however, was nothing in itſelf, recalled to my mind a great many others, to which I had given no attention; and when I think of them, I do not remember ever to have ſeen children, with ſo little ſpeaking to, give ſo little trouble. They hardly ever are out of the mother's ſight, and yet one can hardly perceive they are in company. They are lively and playful, as children of their age ſhould be, but never clamorous or teizing; they are already diſcreet before they know what diſcretion is. But what ſurpriſes me moſt, is, that all this appears to be brought about of itſelf; and that with ſuch an affectionate

of education; which, after a ſhort pauſe, ſhe did in the following manner:

"Happy, my dear friend, are thoſe who are well-born! I lay not ſo great a ſtreſs as Mr. Wolmar does on my own endeavours. I doubt much, notwithſtanding his maxims, that a good man can ever be made out of a child of a bad diſpoſition and character. Convinced, nevertheleſs, of the excellence of his method, I endeavoured to regulate my conduct, in the government of my family, in every reſpect agreeable to him. My firſt hope is, that I ſhall never have a child of a vicious diſpoſition; my ſecond, that I ſhall be able to educate thoſe which God has given me, under the direction of their father, in ſuch a manner, that they may one day have the happineſs of poſſeſſing his virtues. To this end I have endeavoured to adopt his rules, by giving them a principle leſs philoſophical, and more agreeable to maternal affection; namely, to make my children happy. This was the firſt prayer of my heart after I was a mother, and all the buſineſs of my life is to effect it. From the firſt time I held my eldeſt ſon in my arms, I have reflected that the ſtate of infancy is almoſt a fourth part of the longeſt life; that men ſeldom paſs through the other three-fourths; and that it is a piece of cruel prudence to make that firſt part uneaſy, in order to ſecure the happineſs of the reſt, which may never come. I reflected, that during the weakneſs of infancy nature had oppreſſed children in ſo many different ways, that it

it would be barbarous to add to that oppreſſion the empire of our caprices, by depriving them of a liberty ſo very much confined, and which they were ſo little capable of abuſing. I reſolved, therefore, to lay mine under as little conſtraint as poſſible; to leave them to the free exertion of all their little powers; and to ſuppreſs in them none of the emotions of nature. By theſe means I have already gained two great advantages; the one, that of preventing their opening minds from knowing any thing of falſehood, vanity, anger, envy, and, in a word, of all thoſe vices which are the conſequences of ſubjection, and which one is obliged to have recourſe to, when we would have children do what nature does not teach: the other is, that they are more at liberty to grow and gather ſtrength, by the continual exerciſe which inſtinct directs them to. Accuſtomed, like the children of peaſants, to expoſe themſelves to the heat and cold, they grow as hardy; are equally capable of bearing the inclemencies of the weather; and become more robuſt, as living more at their eaſe. This is the way to provide againſt the age of maturity, and the accidents of humanity. I have already told you, that I diſlike that deſtructive puſillanimity, which, by dint of ſollicitude and care, enervates a child, torments it by conſtant reſtraint, confines it by a thouſand vain precautions, and, in ſhort, expoſes it during its whole life to thoſe inevitable dangers it is thus protected from but for a moment; and thus in-

order to avoid catching a few colds while children, men lay up for themſelves conſumptions, pleuriſies, and a world of other diſeaſes.

"What makes children, left thus to themſelves, acquire the ill habits you ſpeak of is, that, not contented with their own liberty, they endeavour to command others which is owing; to the abſurd indulgence of too many fond mothers, who are to be pleaſed only by indulging all the fantaſtical deſires of their children. I flatter myſelf, my friend, that you have ſeen in mine nothing like the deſire of command and authority even over the loweſt domeſtick; and that you have ſeen me countenance as little the falſe complaiſance and ceremony uſed to them. It is in this point that I think I have taken a new and more certain method to make my children at once free, eaſy, obliging, and tractable; and that on a principle the moſt ſimple in the world, which is, by convincing them they are but children.

"To conſider the ſtate of infancy in itſelf, is there a being in the univerſe more helpleſs or miſerable; that lies more at the mercy of every thing about it; that has more need of pity and protection, than an infant? Does it not ſeem that, on this account, the firſt noiſe which nature directs it to make is that of crying and complaint? Does it not ſeem, that nature gives it an affecting and tender appearance, in order to engage every one who approaches it to aſſiſt its weakneſs, and relieve its wants? What, therefore, can be more offenſive, or contrary to order

order, than to ſee a child pert and imperious, commanding every one about him, and aſſuming impudently the tone of a maſter over thoſe who, ſhould they abandon him, would leave him to periſh? Or can any thing be more abſurd than to ſee parents approve ſuch behaviour, and encourage their children to tyranniſe over their nurſes, till they are big enough to tyranniſe over the parents themſelves?

"As to my part, I have ſpared no pains to prevent my ſon's acquiring the dangerous idea of command and ſervitude, and have never given him room to think himſelf attended more out of duty than pity. This point is, perhaps, the moſt difficult and important in education; nor can I well explain it, without entering into all thoſe precautions which I have been obliged to take, to ſuppreſs in him that inſtinctive knowledge, which is ſo ready to diſtinguiſh the mercenary ſervice of domeſticks from the tenderneſs of maternal ſollicitude.

"One of my principal methods has been, as I have juſt obſerved, to convince him of the impoſſibility of his ſubſiſting, at his age, without our aſſiſtance. After which I had no great difficulty to ſhow him, that, in receiving aſſiſtance from others, we lay ourſelves under obligations to them, and are in a ſtate of dependence; and that the ſervants have a real ſuperiority over him, becauſe he cannot do without them, while he, on the contrary, can do them no ſervice: ſo that, inſtead of being vain of their attend-

ance, he looks upon it with a ſort of humiliation, as a mark of his weakneſs, and ardently wiſhes for the time when he ſhall be big and ſtrong enough to have the honour of ſerving himſelf."

"Theſe notions (I ſaid) would be difficult to eſtabliſh in families, where the father and mother themſelves are waited on like children; but in this, where every perſon has ſome employment allotted him, even from the maſter and miſtreſs to the loweſt domeſtick; where the intercourſe between them apparently conſiſts only of reciprocal ſervices, I do not think it impoſſible: but I am at a loſs to conceive how children, accuſtomed to have their real wants ſo readily ſatisfied, can be prevented from expecting the ſame gratification of their imaginary wants or humours; or how it is that they do not ſometimes ſuffer from the humour of a ſervant, who may treat their real wants as imaginary ones."

"Oh! my friend (replied Mrs. Wolmar) an ignorant woman may frighten herſelf at any thing or nothing. But the real wants of children, as well as grown perſons, are very few; we ought rather to regard the duration of our eaſe than the gratifications of a ſingle moment. Do you think, that a child who lies under no reſtraint can ſuffer ſo much from the humour of a governeſs, under the eye of its mother, as to hurt it? You imagine inconveniencies which ariſe from vices already contracted, without reflecting that

that my care has been to prevent ſuch vices from being contracted at all. Women naturally love children; and no miſunderſtanding would ariſe between them, except from the deſire of one to ſubject the other to their caprices. Now that cannot happen here, neither on the part of the child, of whom nothing is required, nor on that of the governeſs, whom the child has no notion of commanding. I have in this acted directly contrary to other mothers, who in appearance would have their children obey the domeſticks, and in reality require the ſervants to obey the children: here neither of them command nor obey: but the child never meets with more complaiſance from any perſon than he ſhows for them. Hence, perceiving that he has no authority over the people about him, he becomes tractable and obliging; in ſeeking to gain the eſteem of others, he contracts an affection for them in turn: this is the infallible effect of ſelf-love; and from this reciprocal affection, ariſing from the notion of equality, naturally reſult thoſe virtues, which are conſtantly preached to children, without any effect.

"I have thought, that the moſt eſſential part in the education of children, and which is ſeldom regarded in the beſt families, is to make them ſenſible of their inability, weakneſs, and dependence, and, as my huſband called it, the heavy yoke of that neceſſity which nature has impoſed on our ſpecies; and that, not only in order to ſhow them how much is d

burthen of that yoke, but eſpecially to inſtruct them betimes in what rank Providence has placed them, that they may not preſume too far above themſelves, or be ignorant of the reciprocal duties of humanity.

"Young people, who from their cradle have been brought up in eaſe and effeminacy, who have been careſſed by every one, indulged in all their caprices, and have been uſed to obtain eaſily every thing they deſired, enter upon the world with many impertinent prejudices; of which they are generally cured by frequent mortifications, affronts, and chagrin. Now, I would willingly ſpare my children this ſecond kind of education, by giving them, at firſt, a juſt notion of things. I had indeed once reſolved to indulge my eldeſt ſon in every thing he wanted, from a perſuaſion that the firſt impulſes of nature muſt be good and ſalutary, but I was not long in diſcovering, that children, conceiving from ſuch treatment that they have a right to be obeyed, depart from a ſtate of nature almoſt as ſoon as born; contracting our vices from our example, and their's by our indiſcretion. I ſaw that if I indulged him in all his humours, they would only increaſe by ſuch indulgence; that it was neceſſary to ſtop at ſome point, and that contradiction would be the more mortifying, as he ſhould be leſs accuſtomed to it: but that it might be leſs painful to him, I began to uſe him to it by degrees; and in order to prevent his tears and lamentations, I made every denial irrevocable.

cable. It is true, I contradict him as little as poſſible, and never without due conſideration. Whatever is given or permitted him is done unconditionally, and at the firſt inſtance; and in this we are indulgent enough: but he never gets any thing by importunity, neither his tears nor entreaties being of any effect. Of this he is now ſo well convinced, that he makes no uſe of them; he goes his way on the firſt word, and frets himſelf no more at ſeeing a box of ſweetmeats taken away from him, than at ſeeing a bird fly away, which he would be glad to catch; there appearing to him the ſame impoſſibility of having the one as the other; and ſo far from beating the chairs and tables, that he dares not lift his hand againſt thoſe who oppoſe him. In every thing that diſpleaſes him, he feels the weight of neceſſity, the effect of his own weakneſs, but never——excuſe me a moment (ſays ſhe) ſeeing I was going to reply; I foreſee your objection, and am coming to it immediately.

"The great cauſe of the ill-humour of children is the care which is taken either to quiet or to aggravate them. They will ſometimes cry for an hour, for no other reaſon in the world than becauſe they perceive we would not have them. So long as we take notice of their crying, ſo long have they a reaſon for continuing to cry; but they will ſoon give over of themſelves, when they ſee no notice is taken of them: for, old or young, nobody loves to throw away his trouble. This is exactly the caſe with

my eldeſt boy, who was once the moſt peeviſh little bawler, ſtunning the whole houſe with his cries: whereas, now you can hardly hear there is a child in the houſe. He cries, indeed, when he is in pain; but then it is the voice of nature, which ſhould never be reſtrained; and he is huſhed again as ſoon as ever the pain is over. For this reaſon I pay great attention to his tears, as I am certain he never ſheds them for nothing: and hence I have gained the advantage of being certain when he is in pain and when not; when he is well and when ſick; an advantage which is loſt with thoſe who cry out of mere humour, and only in order to be appeaſed. I muſt confeſs, however, that this management is not to be expected from nurſes and governeſſes: for, as nothing is more tireſome than to hear a child cry, and as theſe good women think of nothing but the time preſent, they do not foreſee, that by quieting it to-day it will cry the more to-morrow. But what is ſtill worſe, this indulgence produces an obſtinacy, which is of more conſequence as the child grows up. The very cauſe that makes it a ſqualler at three years of age will make it ſtubborn and refractory at twelve, quarrelſome at twenty, imperious and inſolent at thirty, and inſupportable all its life.

"I come now to your objection (added ſhe, ſmiling.) In every indulgence granted to children, they can eaſily ſee our deſire to pleaſe them, and therefore they ſhould be taught to ſuppoſe we have reaſon for refuſing or complying with

with their requeſts. This is another advantage gained by making uſe of authority, rather than perſuaſion, on every neceſſary occaſion. For, as it is impoſſible they can always be blind to our motives, it is natural for them to imagine that we have ſome reaſon for contradicting them, of which they are ignorant. On the contrary, when we have once ſubmitted to their judgement, they will pretend to judge of every thing; and thus become cunning, deceitful, fruitful in ſhifts and chicanery, endeavouring to ſilence thoſe who are weak enough to argue with them: for, when one is obliged to give them an account of things above their comprehenſion, they attribute the moſt prudent conduct to caprice, becauſe they are incapable of underſtanding it. In a word, the only way to render children docile, and capable of reaſoning, is not to reaſon with them at all; but to convince them, that it is above their childiſh capacities; for they will always ſuppoſe the argument in their favour, unleſs you can give them good cauſe to think otherwiſe. They know very well that we are unwilling to diſpleaſe them, when they are certain of our affection; and children are ſeldom miſtaken in this particular: therefore, if I deny any thing to my children, I never reaſon with them; I never tell them why I do ſo or ſo; but I endeavour, as much as poſſible, that they ſhould find it out; and that even after the affair is over. By theſe means they are accuſtomed to think that I never deny

them any thing without a ſufficient reaſon, though they cannot always ſee it.

"On the ſame principle it is, that I never ſuffer my children to join in the converſation of grown perſons, or fooliſhly imagine themſelves upon an equality with them, becauſe they are permitted to prattle. I would have them give a ſhort and modeſt anſwer, when they are ſpoke to, but never to ſpeak of their own head, or aſk impertinent queſtions of perſons ſo much older than themſelves, to whom they ought to ſhow more reſpect."

"Theſe (interrupted I) are very rigid rules, for ſo indulgent a mother as Eloiſa. Pythagoras himſelf was not more ſevere with his diſciples. You are not only afraid to treat them like men, but ſeem to be fearful leſt they ſhould too ſoon ceaſe to be children. By what means can they acquire knowledge more certain and agreeably, than by aſking queſtions of thoſe who know better than themſelves? What would the Pariſian ladies think of your maxims, whoſe children are never thought to prattle too much or too long: they judge of their future underſtanding, by the nonſenſe and impertinence they utter when young? That may not be amiſs, Mr. Wolmar will tell me, in a country where the merit of the people lies in chattering, and a man has no buſineſs to think, if he can but talk. But I cannot underſtand how Eloiſa, who is ſo deſirous of making the lives of her children happy, can reconcile that happineſs with

ſo

ſo much reſtraint; nor amidſt ſo much confinement, what becomes of the liberty with which ſhe pretends to indulge them."

"What (ſays ſhe with impatience) do we reſtrain their liberty, by preventing them from treſpaſſing on our's? And cannot they be happy, truely, without a whole company's ſitting ſilent to admire their puerilities? To prevent the growth of their vanity is a ſurer means to effect their happineſs: for the vanity of mankind is the ſource of their greateſt misfortunes, and there is no perſon ſo great or ſo admired, whoſe vanity has not given him much more pain than pleaſure*.

"What can a child think of himſelf, when he ſees a circle of ſenſible people liſtening to, admiring, and waiting impatiently for his wit, and breaking out in raptures at every impertinent expreſſion? Such falſe applauſe is enough to turn the head of a grown perſon; judge then what effect it muſt have upon that of a child. It is with the prattle of children as with the predictions in the Almanack. It would be ſtrange, if, amidſt ſuch a number of idle words, chance did not now and then jumble ſome of them into ſenſe. Imagine the effect which ſuch flattering exclamations muſt have on a ſimple mother, already too much flattered by her own heart. Think not, however, that I am proof againſt this errour, becauſe I expoſe it. No; I

* If there ever was a man upon earth made happy by *his vanity*, it is paſt a doubt, that he was a fool.

ſee the fault, and yet am guilty of it. But, if I ſometimes admire the repartees of my ſon, I do it at leaſt in ſecret. He will not learn to become a vain prater, by hearing me applaud him; nor will flatterers have the pleaſure, in making me repeat them, of laughing at my weakneſs.

" I remember one day, having company, I went out to give ſome neceſſary orders, and on my return found four or five great blockheads buſy at play with my boy; they came immediately to tell me, with great rapture, the many pretty things he had been ſaying to them, and with which they ſeemed quite charmed. 'Gentlemen (ſaid I, coldly) I doubt not but you know how to make puppets ſay very fine things; but I hope my children will one day be men, when they will be able to act and talk of themſelves; I ſhall then be always glad to hear what they have ſaid and done well.' Seeing this manner of paying their court did not take, they ſince play with my children, but not as with Punchinello; and, to ſay the truth, they are evidently better ſince they have been leſs admired.

" As to their aſking queſtions, I do not prohibit it indiſcriminately. I am the firſt to tell them to aſk, ſoftly, of their father or me, what they deſire to know. But I do not permit them to break in upon a ſerious converſation, to trouble every body with the firſt piece of impertinence that comes into their heads. The art *of aſking* queſtions is not quite ſo eaſy as may

be

be imagined. It is rather that of a maſter than of a ſcholar. The wiſe know and enquire, ſays the Indian proverb, but the ignorant know not even what to enquire after. For want of ſuch previous inſtruction, children, when at liberty to aſk queſtions as they pleaſe, never aſk any but ſuch as are frivolous, and anſwer no purpoſe, or ſuch difficult ones whoſe ſolution is beyond their comprehenſion. Thus, generally ſpeaking, they learn more by the queſtions which are aſked of them, than from thoſe which they aſk of others.

"But, were this method of permitting them to aſk queſtions as uſeful as it is pretended to be, is not the firſt and moſt important ſcience to them, that of being modeſt and diſcreet? And is there any other that ſhould be preferred to this? Of what uſe then is an unlimited freedom of ſpeech to children, before the age at which it is proper for them to ſpeak? Or the right of impertinently obliging perſons to anſwer their childiſh queſtions? Theſe little chattering queriſts aſk queſtions, not ſo much for the ſake of inſtruction, as to engage one's notice. This indulgence, therefore, is not ſo much the way to inſtruct them, as to render them conceited and vain; an inconvenience much greater, in my opinion, than the advantage they gain by it: for ignorance will by degrees diminiſh, but vanity will always increaſe.

"The worſt that can happen from too long a reſerve will be, that my ſon, when he comes

to years of diſcretion, will be leſs fluent in ſpeech, and may want that volubility of tongue, and multiplicity of words, which he might otherwiſe have acquired: but when we conſider how much the cuſtom of paſſing away life in idle prattle impoveriſhes the underſtanding, this happy ſterility of words appears rather an advantage than otherwiſe. Shall the organ of truth, the moſt worthy organ of man, the only one whoſe uſe diſtinguiſhes him from the brutes, ſhall this be proſtituted to no better purpoſes than thoſe which are anſwered as well by the inarticulate ſounds of other animals? He degrades himſelf even below them, when he ſpeaks and ſays nothing; a man ſhould preſerve his dignity, as ſuch, even in his lighteſt amuſements. If it be thought polite to ſtun the company with idle prate, I think it a much greater inſtance of true politeneſs to let others ſpeak before us; to pay a greater deference to what is ſaid, than to what we ſay ourſelves; and to let them ſee we reſpect them too much, to think they can be entertained by our nonſenſe. The good opinion of the world, that which makes us courted and careſſed by others, is not obtained ſo much by diſplaying our own talents, as by giving others an opportunity of diſplaying their's, and by placing our own modeſty as a foil to their vanity. You need not be afraid that a man of ſenſe, who is ſilent only from reſerve and diſcretion, ſhould ever be taken for a fool. It is impoſſible in any country whatever that a man

ſhould be characteriſed by what he has not ſaid, or that he ſhould be deſpiſed for being ſilent.

"On the contrary, it may be generally obſerved that people of few words impoſe ſilence on others, who pay an extraordinary attention to what they ſay, which gives them every advantage of converſation. It is ſo difficult for the moſt ſenſible man to retain his preſence of mind, during the hurry of a long diſcourſe; ſo ſeldom that ſomething does not eſcape him, which he afterwards repents of, that it is no wonder if he ſometimes chooſes to ſuppreſs what is pertinent, to avoid the riſque of talking nonſenſe.

"But there is a great difference between ſix years of age and twenty; my ſon will not be always a child, and in proportion as his underſtanding ripens, his father deſigns it ſhall be exerciſed. As to my part, my taſk does not extend ſo far. I may nurſe children, but I have not the preſumption to think of making them men. I hope (ſays ſhe, looking at her huſband) this will be the employment of more able heads. I am a woman and a mother, and know my place and my duty; hence, I ſay again, it is not my duty to educate my ſons, but to prepare them for being educated.

"Nor do I any thing more in this than purſue the ſyſtem of Mr. Wolmar, in every particular; which, the farther I proceed, the more reaſon I find to pronounce excellent and juſt. Obſerve my children, particularly the eldeſt; have you ever ſeen children more happy, more chearful,

or leſs troubleſome? You ſee them jump and laugh, and run about all day, without incommoding any one. What pleaſure, what independence, is their age capable of which they do not enjoy, or which they abuſe? They are under as little reſtraint in my preſence as when I am abſent. On the contrary, they ſeem always at more liberty under the eye of their mother than elſewhere; and though I am the author of all the ſeverity they undergo, they find me always more indulgent than any body elſe: for I cannot ſupport the thought of their not loving me better than any other perſon in the world. The only rules impoſed on them in our company are thoſe of liberty itſelf, viz. they muſt lay the company under no greater reſtraint than they themſelves are under; they muſt not cry louder than we talk; and as they are not obliged to concern themſelves with us, they are not to expect our notice. Now, if ever they treſpaſs againſt ſuch equitable rules as theſe, all their puniſhment is, to be immediately ſent away; and I make this a puniſhment, by contriving to render every other place diſagreeable to them. Setting this reſtriction aſide, they are, in a manner, quite unreſtrained; we never oblige them to learn any thing; never tire them with fruitleſs corrections; never reprimand them for trifles; the only leſſons which are given them being thoſe of practice. Every perſon in the houſe having my directions, is ſo diſcreet and careful in this buſineſs, that they leave me nothing to wiſh for;

and,

and, if any defect ſhould ariſe, my own affiduity would eaſily repair it.

"Yeſterday, for example, the eldeſt boy having taken a drum from his brother, ſet him a crying. Fanny ſaid nothing to him, at the time; but about an hour after, when ſhe ſaw him in the height of his amuſement, ſhe in her turn took it from him, which ſet him a crying alſo. 'What, (ſaid ſhe) do you cry for? You took it juſt now by force from your brother, and now I take it from you; what have you to complain of? Am not I ſtronger than you?" She then began to beat the drum, as if ſhe took pleaſure in it. So far all went well till ſome time after ſhe was going to give the drum to the younger, but I prevented her, as this was not acting naturally, and might create envy between the brothers. In loſing the drum, the youngeſt ſubmitted to the hard law of neceſſity; the elder, in having it taken from him, was ſenſible of injuſtice: both knew their own weakneſs, and were in a moment reconciled."

A plan ſo new, and ſo contrary to received opinions, at firſt ſurpriſed me. By dint of explanation, however, they at length repreſented it in ſo admirable a light, that I was made ſenſible the path of nature is the beſt. The only inconvenience which I find in this method, and which appeared to me very great, was to neglect the only faculty which children poſſeſs in perfection, and which is only debilitated by their growing into years. Methinks, according to

their

their own ſyſtem of education, that the weaker the underſtanding, the more one ought to exerciſe and ſtrengthen the memory, which is then ſo proper to be exerciſed. "It is that (ſaid I) which ought to ſupply the place of reaſon. The mind becomes heavy and dull by inaction. The ſeed takes no root in a ſoil badly prepared, and it is a ſtrange manner of preparing children to become reaſonable, by beginning to make them ſtupid."—"How! ſtupid! (cried Mrs. Wolmar immediately.) Do you confound two qualities ſo different, and almoſt contrary, as memory and judgement*? As if an ill-digeſted and unconnected lumber of things, in a weak head, did not do more harm than good to the underſtanding. I confeſs, that of all the faculties of the human mind, the memory is the firſt which opens itſelf, and is the moſt convenient to be cultivated in children: but which, in your opinion, ſhould be preferred, that which is moſt eaſy for them to learn, or that which is moſt important for them to know? Conſider the uſe which is generally made of this aptitude, the eternal conſtraint to which they are ſubject, in order to diſplay their memory, and then compare its utility to what they are made to ſuffer. Why ſhould a child be compelled to ſtudy languages he will never talk, and that even before he has learnt his own tongue? Why ſhould he be forced inceſſantly to make and repeat

* Here appears to be ſome little miſtake. Nothing is ſo uſeful to the judgement as memory: it is true, however, *that it is not the* remembrance of words.

repeat verſes he does not underſtand, and whoſe harmony all lies at the end of his fingers; or be perplexed to death with circles and triangles, of which he has no idea; or why burthened with an infinity of names of town and rivers, which he conſtantly miſtakes, and learns a-new every day? Is this to cultivate the memory to the improvement of the underſtanding, or is all ſuch frivolous acquiſition worth one of thoſe many tears it coſts him? Were all this, however, merely uſeleſs, I ſhould not ſo much complain of it; but is it not pernicious to accuſtom a child to be ſatisfied with mere words? Muſt not ſuch a heap of crude and indigeſted terms and notions be injurious to the formation of thoſe primary ideas with which the human underſtanding ought firſt to be furniſhed? And would it not be better to have no memory at all, than to have it ſtuffed with ſuch a heap of literary lumber, to the excluſion of neceſſary knowledge?

"If nature has given to the brain of children that ſoftneſs of texture, which renders it proper to receive every impreſſion, it is not proper for us to imprint the names of ſovereigns, dates, terms of art, and other inſignificant words of no meaning to them while young, nor of any uſe to them as they grow old: but it is our duty to trace out betimes all thoſe ideas which are relative to the ſtate and condition of humanity, thoſe which relate to their duty and happineſs, that they may ſerve to conduct them through life in a manner

agreeable

agreeable to their being and faculties. The memory of a child may be exerciſed, without poring over books. Every thing he ſees, every thing he hears, catches his attention, and is ſtored up in his memory: he keeps a journal of the actions and converſation of men, and from every ſcene that preſents itſelf deduces ſomething to enrich his memory. It is in the choice of objects, in the care to ſhow him ſuch only as he ought to know, and to hide from him thoſe of which he ought to be ignorant, that the true art of cultivating the memory conſiſts.

"You muſt not think, however (continued Eloiſa) that we entirely neglect that care on which you think ſo much depends. A mother, if ſhe is the leaſt vigilant, holds in her hands the reins over the paſſions of her children. There are ways and means to excite in them a deſire of inſtruction; and ſo far as they are compatible with the freedom of the child, and tend not to ſow in them the ſeeds of vice, I readily employ them, without being chagrined if they are not attended with ſucceſs: for there is always time enough for knowledge, but not a moment ſhould be loſt in forming the diſpoſition. Mr. Wolmar lays, indeed, ſo great a ſtreſs on the firſt dawnings of reaſon, that he maintains, though his ſon ſhould be totally ignorant at twelve years old, he might know not a whit the leſs at fifteen; without conſidering that nothing is leſs neceſſary than for a man to be a ſcholar, and nothing more ſo than for him to be juſt and prudent.

dent. You know that our eldeſt reads already tolerably well. I will tell you how he became fond of it: I had formed a deſign to repeat to him, from time to time, ſome fable out of La Fontaine, and had already begun, when he aſked me one day, ſeriouſly, if ravens could talk. I ſaw immediately the difficulty of making him ſenſible of the difference between fable and falſehood, and laying aſide La Fontaine, got off as well as I could, being from that moment convinced that fables were only proper for grown perſons, and that ſimple truth only ſhould be repeated to children. In the room of La Fontaine, therefore, I ſubſtituted a collection of little intereſting and inſtructive hiſtories, taken moſtly from the Bible; and, finding he grew attentive to theſe tales, I compoſed others as entertaining as poſſible, and applicable to preſent circumſtances. Theſe I wrote out fair, in a fine book ornamented with prints, which I kept locked up, except at the times of reading. I read alſo but ſeldom, and never long at a time, repeating often the ſame ſtory, and commenting a little, before I paſſed on to another. When I obſerved him particularly intent, I pretended to recollect ſome orders neceſſary to be given, and left the ſtory unfiniſhed juſt in the moſt intereſting part, laying the book down negligently, and leaving it behind me. I was no ſooner gone than he would take it up, and go to his Fanny, or ſomebody elſe, begging them to read the remainder of the tale; but as nobody

was

was at his command, and every one had his inſtructions, he was frequently refuſed. One would give him a flat denial, another had ſomething elſe to do, a third muttered it out very low and badly, and a fourth would leave it in the middle, juſt as I had done before. When we ſaw him heartily wearied out with ſo much dependence, ſomebody intimated to him to learn to read himſelf, and then he need not aſk any body, but might turn it over at pleaſure. He was greatly delighted with the ſcheme, but where ſhould he find any one obliging enough to inſtruct him? This was a new difficulty, which we took care, however, not to make too great. In ſpite of this precaution he was tired out three or four times; but of this I took no other notice, than to endeavour to make my little hiſtories the more amuſing, which brought him again to the charge with ſo much ardour, that though it is not ſix months ſince he began to learn, he will be very ſoon able to read the whole collection, without any aſſiſtance.

"It is in this manner I endeavour to excite his zeal and inclination to attain ſuch knowledge as requires application and patience; but though he learns to read, he gets no ſuch knowledge from books, for there is no ſuch in the books he reads, nor is the application to it proper for children. I am deſirous alſo of furniſhing their heads with ideas, and not with words; for which reaſon I never ſet them to get any thing by heart."—

"Never!

"Never! (ſaid I, interrupting her) that is ſaying a great deal. Surely you have taught him his prayers and his catechiſm!"—"There you are miſtaken (replied ſhe). As to the article of prayers, I ſay mine every morning and evening aloud in the nurſery, which is ſufficient to teach them, without obliging them to learn. As to their catechiſm, they know not what it is."—"What! Eloiſa! your children never learn their catechiſm!"—"No, my friend, my children do not learn their catechiſm."—"Indeed! (ſaid I, quite ſurpriſed) ſo pious a mother!—I really do not comprehend you. Pray what is the reaſon they do not learn it?"—"The reaſon is (ſaid ſhe) that I would have them ſome time or other believe it: I would have them be Chriſtians."—"I underſtand you (ſaid I;) you would not have their faith conſiſt in mere words; you would have them believe, as well as know, the articles of their religion; and you judge very prudently, that it is impoſſible for a man to believe what he does not underſtand."—"You are very difficult (ſaid Mr. Wolmar, ſmiling;) pray, were you a chriſtian by chance?"—"I endeavour to be one (anſwered I, reſolutely). I believe all that I underſtand of the Chriſtian religion, and reſpect the reſt, without rejecting it." Eloiſa made me a ſign of approbation, and we reſumed the former ſubject of converſation; when, after explaining herſelf on ſeveral other ſubjects, and convincing me of her active and indefatigable maternal zeal, ſhe concluded

by

by obſerving that her method exactly anſwered the two objects ſhe propoſed, namely, the permitting the natural diſpoſition and character of her children to diſcover themſelves, and empowering herſelf to ſtudy and examine it.

"My children (continued ſhe) lie under no manner of reſtraint, and yet cannot abuſe their liberty. Their diſpoſition can neither be depraved nor perverted; their bodies are left to grow, and their judgements to ripen at eaſe and leiſure: ſubjection debaſes not their minds, nor does flattery excite their ſelf-love; they think themſelves neither powerful men nor enſlaved animals, but children, happy and free. To guard them from vices not in their nature, they have, in my opinion, a better preſervative than lectures, which they would not underſtand, or of which they would ſoon be tired. This conſiſts in the good behaviour of thoſe about them; in the good converſation they hear, which is ſo natural to them all, that they ſtand in no need of inſtruction; it conſiſts in the peace and unity of which they are witneſſes; in the harmony which is conſtantly obſerved, and in the conduct and converſation of every one around them. Nurſed hitherto in natural ſimplicity, whence ſhould they derive thoſe vices, of which they have never ſeen the example? Whence thoſe paſſions they have no opportunity to feel, thoſe prejudices which nothing they obſerve can impreſs? You ſee they betray no bad inclination; they have adopted no erroneous notions.

Their

Their ignorance is not opinionated, their deſires are not obſtinate; their propenſity to evil is prevented, Nature is juſtified, and every thing ſerves to convince me, that the faults we accuſe her of are not thoſe of Nature, but our own.

"It is thus that, giving up to the indulgence of their own inclinations without diſguiſe or alteration, our children do not take an external and artificial form, but preſerve exactly that of their original character. It is thus that their character daily unfolds itſelf to obſervation, and gives us an opportunity to ſtudy the workings of nature, even to her moſt ſecret principles. Sure of never being reprimanded or puniſhed, they are ignorant of lying or concealing any thing from us: and in whatever they ſay, whether before us or among themſelves, they diſcover, without reſtraint, whatever lies at the bottom of their hearts. Being left at full liberty to prattle all day long to each other, they are under no reſtraint before me. I never check them, enjoin them to ſilence, or indeed pretend to take notice of what they ſay, while they talk ſometimes very blameably: though I ſeem to know nothing of the matter. At the ſame time, however, I liſten to them with attention, and keep an exact account of all they ſay or do: but theſe are the natural productions of the ſoil which we are to cultivate. A naughty word in their mouths is a plant or ſeed foreign to the ſoil, ſown by the vagrant wind: ſhould I cut it off by a reprimand, it would not fail ere long to ſhoot forth again.

Inſtead

Inſtead of that, therefore, I look carefully to find its root, and pluck it up. "I am only (ſaid ſhe, ſmiling) the ſervant of the gardener; I only weed the garden, by taking away the vicious plants: it is for him to cultivate the good ones. It muſt be confeſſed alſo, that with all the pains I may take, I ought to be well ſeconded to ſucceed, and that ſuch ſucceſs depends on a concurrence of circumſtances, which is perhaps to be met with no where but here. The knowledge and diſcretion of a ſenſible father are required to diſtinguiſh and point out, in the midſt of eſtabliſhed prejudices, the true art of governing children from the time of their birth; his patience is required to carry it into execution, without ever contradicting his precepts by his practice; it is neceſſary that one's children ſhould be happy in their birth, and that Nature ſhould have made them amiable; it is neceſſary to have none but ſenſible and well-diſpoſed ſervants about one, who will not fail to enter into the deſign of their maſter. One brutal or ſervile domeſtick would be enough to ſpoil all. In ſhort, when one thinks how many adventitious circumſtances may injure the beſt deſigns, and ſpoil the beſt-concerted projects, one ought to be thankful to providence for every think that ſucceeds, and to confeſs that wiſdom depends greatly on good fortune."—"Say, rather (replied I) that good fortune depends on prudence. Don't you ſee that the concurrence of circumſtances, on which you felicitate yourſelf, is your own doing, and that every

every one who approaches you is, in a manner, compelled to reſemble you? O ye mothers of families! when you complain that your views, your endeavours, are not ſeconded, how little do you know your own power! Be but what you ought, and you will ſurmount all obſtacles; you will oblige every one about you to diſcharge their duty, if you but diſcharge your's. Are not your rights thoſe of nature? In ſpite of the maxims or practice of vice, theſe will be always reſpected by the human heart. Do you but aſpire to be women and mothers, and the moſt gentle empire on earth will be alſo the moſt reſpectable.

In the cloſe of our converſation Eloiſa remarked that her taſk was become much eaſier ſince the arrival of Harriet. "It is certain (ſaid ſhe) I ſhould have had leſs trouble if I would have excited a ſpirit of emulation between the brothers. But this ſtep appeared to me too dangerous; I choſe, therefore, rather to take more pains, and to run leſs riſque. Harriet has made up for this; for, being of a different ſex, their elder, fondly beloved by both, and very ſenſible for her age, I make a kind of governeſs of her, and with the more ſucceſs, as her leſſons are leſs ſuſpected to be ſuch.

"As to herſelf, her education falls under my care; but the principles on which I proceed are ſo different, as to deſerve a particular explanation. Thus much at leaſt I can ſay of her already, that it will be difficult to improve on

the talents nature has given her, and that her merit is equal to her mother's, if her mother could poſſibly have an equal."

We now, my lord, expect you every day here, ſo that this ſhould be my laſt letter. But I underſtand the reaſon of your ſtay with the army, and tremble for the conſequence. Eloiſa is no leſs uneaſy, and deſires you will oftener let her hear from you; conjuring you, at the ſame time, to think how much you endanger the peace of your friends, by expoſing your perſon. For my part, I have nothing to ſay to you on this ſubject. Diſcharge your duty; the advice of puſillanimity is as foreign from my heart as from your's. I know too well, my dear B——, the only cataſtrophe worthy of you, is, to loſe your life in the ſervice and for the honour of your country; but ought you not to give ſome account of your days to him who has preſerved his only for your ſake?

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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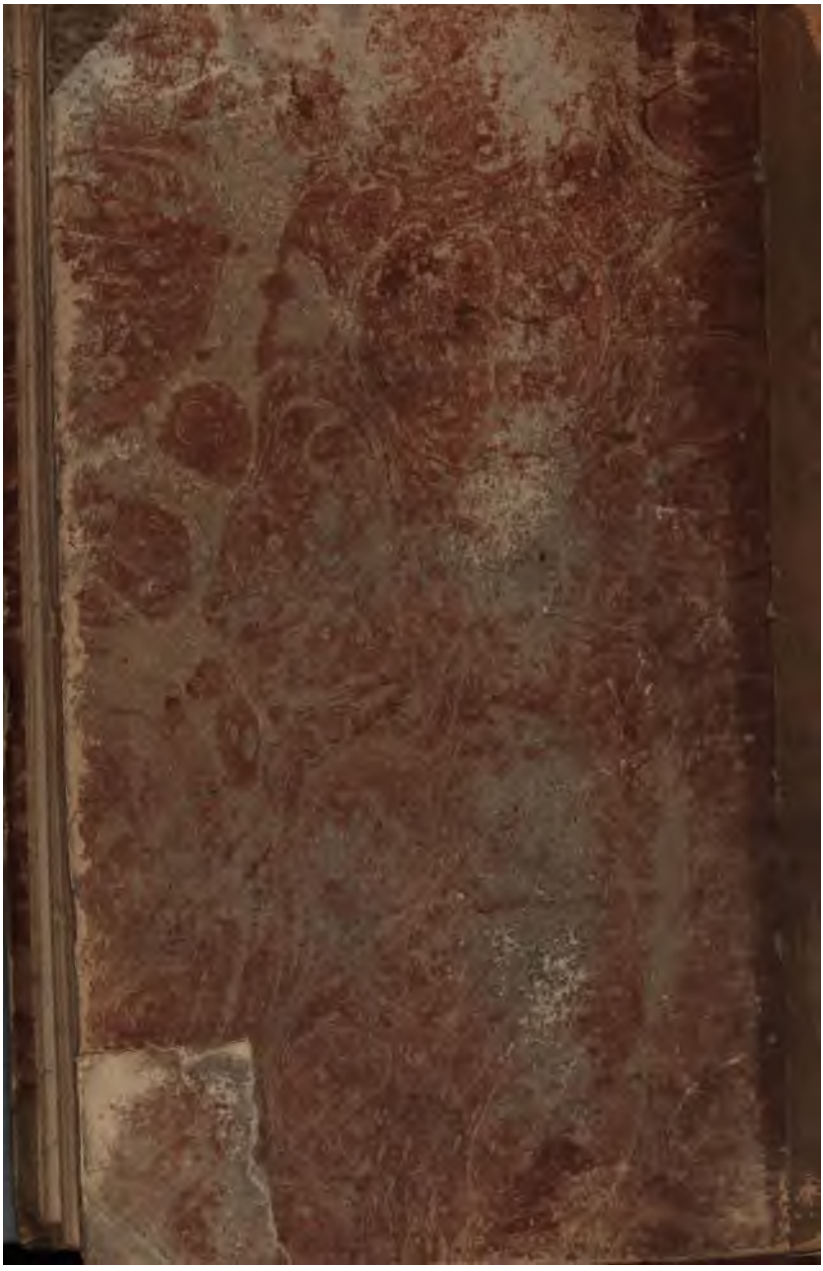
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